

Curious Project Evaluation Report

Report to



March 2013

the social marketing gateway

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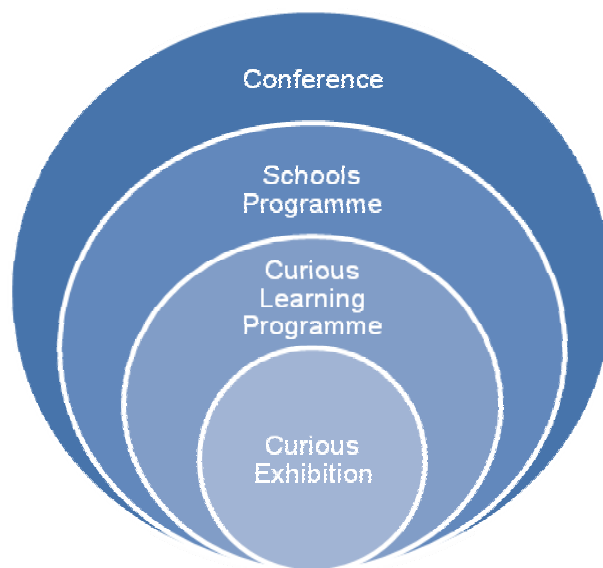
1 Introduction

1.1 Project Background

Based in St Mungo Museum in Glasgow, the Curious Project was an innovative project designed to support and celebrate the London 2012 Olympic Games and prepare for the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games by creating intercultural dialogue and developing a legacy of increased understanding of each other, our city and our collections.

Curious is part of the Scottish Project. The Scottish Project has been funded by Legacy Trust UK, creating a lasting impact from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games by funding ideas and local talent to inspire creativity across the UK and by the National Lottery through Creative Scotland.

The Curious Project comprised 4 key strands:



1. An eighteen month community-led **exhibition** in St Mungo's Museum of Religious Life and Art, from August 2011
2. A **learning programme** focused on Cultural Awareness and strategies for intercultural dialogue, based on objects from the museum collections.
3. A **schools programme** developed in partnership with schools and reflecting the approach of the Curriculum for Excellence.
4. A **conference** in 2012 with delegates reflecting on the impact of cultural programmes supporting international events such as Olympic & Commonwealth Games.

The exhibition itself, at the core of the Curious Project, was community led and curated, bringing a real sense of the diversity of communities across Glasgow and highlighting their individual perspectives and pride in the city. The exhibition comprised thirty objects, twenty-eight of which were from Glasgow Museums' collections, as well as two objects created by communities in response to other objects on display.

The project also included and supported other smaller community exhibitions including a month long crowd-sourced photographic exhibition which aimed to depict what Glasgow means to its many different residents.

An additional strand to the exhibition was the creation of a number of volunteering opportunities. These were primarily focused on the volunteer events team (see below) and on a group of volunteers offering tours of the exhibition in a variety of different languages. Both initiatives were particularly successful in attracting English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students to participate.

Alongside the exhibition, the project devised and ran a learning programme offering full day, half day and shorter sessions to public sector staff, social groups, health workers, ESOL students and other groups. This programme was particularly successful in attracting staff and students from colleges around the Glasgow area.

A schools programme was also developed, again object-focussed, and designed to fit with the Curriculum for Excellence approach; incorporating cross-curricular work and active learning elements. As well as an active learning trail and under-fives workshop within the museum, the project worked with local schools, encouraging them to use museum objects to inspire cross-curricular work.

There were a number of events undertaken as part of the Curious Project including showcasing song and dance from different cultures at the Merchant City Festival, story performance in conjunction with the University of Glasgow and 'Across Cultures', a performance evening as part of Refugee Week. An important facet of the events programme was the involvement of a group of volunteers, who worked together undertaking a number of activities including the creation of two intercultural event days for the museum and an exhibition reflecting on their involvement in the Curious Project.

A two-day symposium took place at the end of 2012. The symposium reflected on learning from Curious and attracted a range of delegates.

1.2 Research Objectives

Research was commissioned to take a broad but in-depth exploration of the impact of the Curious Project on all who engaged with it, either through the exhibition, the learning programme or the volunteering initiatives. The schools programme was not included in this evaluation.

The research objectives were defined as follows:

- To assess the impact the Curious Exhibition has on visitor learning and understanding of the project aims
- To assess how the development of the Curious Exhibition influenced participant learning and understanding of the project aims
- To assess the impact that the Curious learning programme has had on the professional and/or private lives of participants, as well as its impact on their learning and understanding of the project aims
- To assess the impact of the Curious volunteering initiative
- To assess the level of success of specific Curious events

1.3 Research Methodology

There were four key strands to be included in the Curious evaluation and each used a variety of different methodologies, primarily focused on qualitative group discussions and in-depth interviews.

1.3.1 Curious Exhibition

The evaluation of the exhibition was conducted in 2 main phases:

- Gathering primary data through accompanied visits at the exhibition
- Analysing existing data gathered by the client comprising a range of visitor comments and information and feedback from those involved in the development of the exhibition

Accompanied Visits

A series of 5 days of accompanied visits to the Curious Exhibition was undertaken by two members of The Gateway's senior research team, at St Mungo Museum. These took place on weekdays and at weekends, to ensure we engaged with a broad range of visitors to the exhibition. The actual fieldwork days were as follows:

- Saturday 25th August
- Friday 31st August
- Wednesday 12th September
- Saturday 15th September
- Friday 28th September

The researchers spent all day in the exhibition space and asked visitors, either prior to looking around the exhibition, or just as they were leaving, whether they would participate in a short interview. Due to the relatively small scale of the exhibition, the researchers recruited visitors themselves, rather than employing an additional recruiter to carry out this stage.

Incentives of £10 were provided to respondents; however it is worth noting that for future research where the exhibition is relatively small and the interview length correspondingly short, an incentive may not be required. In general, this simply acted as an extra encouragement to take part and the researchers concluded that they would have had a similar level of interest in participating without the incentive payment.

Two approaches were taken to the accompanied visits:

- Some visitors were accompanied as they walked around the exhibition and asked to explain their thoughts and reactions to the objects as they went
- Most visitors were interviewed at the end of their visit, and took the researcher back to view and explain objects that most interested them

The latter approach was adopted for most interviews as it was felt by the researchers to be generally less intrusive to the visit. It was also clear that potential respondents were more predisposed to taking part in an interview at the end of their visit, than in having a researcher accompany them around the exhibition, intruding upon their visit.

Interviews lasted between 15 and 30 minutes, and respondents were asked to complete a short self-completion questionnaire asking them to note what they **liked** about the exhibition, what they **thought** about the exhibition and what they would **take away** from the exhibition, in their own words. A copy of this can be found in Appendix 1.

In total, the researchers conducted 25 interviews, speaking to 46 visitors across the 5 interviewing days. Interviews were conducted with individuals, couples and trios as appropriate, and researchers were careful not to impact on the visitors' enjoyment of the exhibition.

Comprehensive notes were written up following each interview to feed in to the analysis process.

Analysis of Existing Data

A range of data sources were provided by the Curious Team for analysis and inclusion in the evaluation. These were broken into two distinct parts:

- Feedback from groups and individuals involved in developing and curating the Curious Exhibition which comprised comments (from 5 individuals), video diaries (5 groups of young people) and questionnaire responses (83)
- Comments (163) from the Curious Exhibition visitor comments book

A full list of secondary data sources can be found in appendix 4.

1.3.2 Curious Learning Programme

This stage of the research also comprised two main parts:

- Collection of primary research data through focus groups with people who had participated in the learning programme
- Analysis of existing data collected by the client during the course of the learning programme sessions

Focus Groups

Contact details were provided by the Curious Project team for people who had participated in the learning programme. These were categorised into the following groups:

- Individuals & group members
- Tutors
- Students
- Glasgow Life staff

The Gateway team contacted potential respondents to arrange a series of focus group discussions. Groups were co-ordinated as follows:

- Individuals & group members – 1st October, Kelvingrove Museum – 5 participants
- Glasgow Life staff – 17th October, St Mungo Museum – 7 respondents

Two tutors were enlisted to help recruit a group of ESOL students from City of Glasgow College. They struggled to enlist students to attend for a two main reasons; firstly issues around timings – October holidays then the festival of Eid meant students were not around or otherwise occupied – and secondly, the students who had participated in the learning programme had done so many months before and struggled to remember much about the experience. A hybrid group discussion was therefore conducted comprising tutors and students:

- Tutors/students – 25th October – 3 respondents

It was also difficult to co-ordinate a suitable meeting time and location for tutors from different colleges to attend a group discussion. Therefore, in addition to the hybrid group described above a number of further telephone depth interviews were conducted with college staff from Anniesland, Cardonald and City of Glasgow colleges:

- 2 x ESOL tutors and 1 x ESOL Head of Department

All groups and depth interviews were conducted by The Gateway's senior researchers and groups lasted approximately 90 minutes whilst depth interviews were around 30-45 minutes.

Existing data collected by the Curious team was referenced at each stage during this process, and ultimately used to compare and contrast with findings from the focus groups, as well as to provide broader context on the profile of participants.

1.3.3 Volunteer Initiatives

This stage of the research involved consulting with volunteers who had participated in either the language tours or the events team. The intention was to run two separate focus groups, one with each volunteer group.

The Curious Project team contacted all volunteers asking them to participate in the research evaluation, and seeking permission to pass on their contact details to The Social Marketing Gateway team. Contact details were provided for 5 volunteers from the events team and 6 volunteers from the language tours team. These volunteers were then sent introductory emails from The Gateway explaining the purpose of the research and outlining the process. Emails were followed up with telephone calls to arrange attendance at interviews and group discussions.

One group discussion took place with event volunteers comprising 3 participants. The group lasted 90 minutes and was hosted in a meeting room at St Mungo Museum on Friday 5th October.

Volunteers who attended the group discussion were provided with bus tickets in order to facilitate their participation.

It proved impossible to co-ordinate a group discussion with language tour volunteers due to their various other commitments and geographical dispersal. Several of the potential participants had gained employment or moved away from Glasgow since their time spent as a volunteer at the Curious Exhibition. Following several attempts to co-ordinate a central meeting, it was agreed that we would conduct individual telephone depth interviews with language tour volunteers. Two interviews were therefore conducted on 26th and 27th October.

Additional insights regarding the volunteer initiatives were gained from participants in the learning programme research who had been involved with volunteers, either as tutors or in referring volunteers to the programme.

1.3.4 Events

The Curious team ran a number of events during the course of the Curious Project. Feedback was not captured consistently at each event, however for the Human Library and Working Songs events various sources of evaluation data were available including:

- Short films made at the Human Library event
- Ad-hoc emails relating to the Human Library event (11 emails)
- Responses to evaluation of Working Songs event (21 comments)
- Drawings (7) and blog comments (9) relating to the Working Songs event

This stage of the research process focused exclusively on secondary data analysis, using information and inputs provided by the client.

2 Curious Exhibition

2.1 Exhibition Development

Various sources of information provided by the Curious Project Team were used for analysis of the exhibition development process. The feedback came from various groups who were involved in different sessions run by the Curious Team to select objects, create art and animation and tell and share their stories.

Although the people involved came from different backgrounds and were working within different groups, it is clear that all benefited from their participation in the development of the exhibition in a number of different ways including:

- Opportunity to explore museum resources
- Chance to discuss aspects of their own personal history
- Sharing elements from their own and other cultures such as song and dance
- Participation in creative tasks such as drawing, painting and animation
- Improving English language skills

The legacy of their involvement was partly practical - relating to the development of new skills - but also attitudinal – with views relating to different cultures changed and expanded, and for some a new viewpoint towards museums developed.

2.1.1 YWCA

An evaluation was undertaken with women from Glasgow YWCA who participated in the development of the exhibition. Comments were collated from 6 women about their experiences in selecting objects and creating the Tinga Tinga painting.

The feedback shows that the object selection exercise captured the imagination of the women involved and engaging them in the process. Objects were found that the women could tell personal stories about relating to their own experiences.

"I found the brush interesting for me because when I was in Morocco I would just use it at the mosque, that's why I really like it."

"I liked the picture of the guy, the one man band because it reminded me of the Barras."

"I like the radio very much because when we were young we had to sit, sit with my dad and listen to the radio especially the cricket match because he was from India and in those times he was in the British Army and we had to listen and cricket was his life....We used to call it wireless we never used to call it radio."

Other objects were selected simply because they were interesting to the women, even if there was no specific connection with their own past or memories.

"I want to talk about the Warri board, I found that really interesting because it was something that we can all relate to regardless where we are from as it was a game and we could all be taught how to play this game and we could play it together and was also really interesting because women from different parts of Africa knew the game in one shape or another. And it kind of makes the world seem less big or well the continent less big anyway, everyone is playing the same game."

Working together as a group and interacting with each other was an important element of the Curious Project sessions for participants and was mentioned as a highlight by several of the women. In addition, the group leader praised the fact that exercises undertaken by the group, including making the wish tree, were very much focused on the women and gave them many opportunities to talk about themselves.

"I really enjoyed this group and I found all people very nice and they are very friendly, that's why I like it."

"I would like to thank the group that we have been working with and they have been very helpful and very supportive and I like coming to the YWCA and the quality time spending with other people than staying at home and sleeping all day."

"I like the group, I like the class and I like the people that I met, their young and stimulate me and keep my brain going."

Creation of the Tinga Tinga painting was also a highlight, giving participants the opportunity to learn new skills and techniques and ultimately producing something they were proud of.

"I really enjoyed everything in the painting and I made a butterfly and flowers"

"It was great to be using different techniques and quite simple techniques really to get something amazing in just a few hours and I really enjoyed seeing the group work together and produce something that we were generally proud of, again after a couple of weeks."

The following quote was taken from a comment posted on the Curious Project blog.

"The painting and animated film created by the 'Y Women Social Group' of the YWCA Glasgow is fantastic....They are very proud of their work... and rightly so!"

The evaluation uncovered very few comments on potential improvements to the sessions, however two elements were highlighted:

- More time to complete the activities
- Better introductory explanation and reinforcement of the purpose of the sessions

The latter issue seems to relate to the composition of the group changing week by week but partly due to language barriers. It was therefore felt that participants didn't always understand why they were undertaking the activities and what the end outcome would be

"I think it was only near the end that women started saying 'oh yes there's going to be an exhibition and they're going to have our stuff in it'."

Overall, participating in the Curious Project was clearly a valuable experience for the women involved. It delivered positive benefits in a number of areas:

- Increasing confidence relating to art and museums
- Improving language skills
- Introduction to new creative skills

"Thank you so much to all of you at St Mungo's for all the energy and the efforts that you put into doing this work with the group. I really really think it's made them maybe more confident about talking about art, more likely to go and access all these free museums that we have in Glasgow...it was great thank you very much."

2.1.2 ESOL

Feedback was sought from ESOL students from Langside College who participated in the development of the exhibition. 16 comments were received and the words used most often within these comments are shown in the word cloud below



It is clear from this that the experience was interesting and provoked discussion about different cultures and traditions amongst students. The experience is summed up well by the following quotes:

"It was interesting to visit the museum. Last week, we looked at different tradition objects, and we played fun games. I enjoyed the class today, we have spoke about different culture and traditional stuff."

“Last week we look for object from different culture. Today we speak about celebration. I think lessons have been very interesting because I know more about people from different countries and different cultures which I study.”

In other data collected from ESOL students about their visit to the exhibition, participants were asked to explain what they liked; what they thought and what they didn't like. Similar themes emerged such as:

- Visiting the museum was a new experience for many, and one which they very much enjoyed
- The multicultural aspect of the exhibition was very interesting and motivating
- One of the key benefits of attending was learning and speaking English within a different environment

Some examples of the responses to this exercise by ESOL students are shown below in their own words:

What I liked



"Listening to other people's stories and finding out which memories some objects trigger. We're all from very different countries and culture, but many memories and feelings we carry around inside us are the same and often related to affection"

"I really like this way. I really enjoy it. Because I am first time go to outside, so I like it. I like the method of education."

"I like museum but much more to speak with my teachers, student's and girls to work in the museum because I learn english language. I like to go with car in museum with my teach and friend's because we speak and I like to speak english much more."

"I like this section I like chatting and been to the museum. I like talking about objects"

What I thought



"I learn more of things. Because I am first time see the museum so I am really enjoy and more of things I like. I like the collection of different countries"

"I never was in museum before and I think is beautiful and I think is very interesting to see something antique"

"I learned how to respect people and to make them happy"

"one I came here I feeling to go back to many years ago I remember many story about history. that good"

2.1.3 Young People

Feedback from young people who attended an event at the Glasgow Museums Resource Centre (GMRC) was in the form of video diaries. They were asked to answer 3 questions on camera:

- What 3 words they would use to describe the experience
- What surprised them about the experience
- What was their favourite object

The responses were universally enthusiastic about the session at the Resource Centre and, although different young people had different highlights, it was clear that everyone took something out of the experience. For some this was learning about new objects and the cultures they came from. For others it was having the opportunity to be creative and learn new skills like animation. One of the aspects that young people found quite surprising was the range and breadth of objects from different cultures and eras that they came across at the session.

The words they used to describe the experience highlight the positive response from the young people involved.



The young people selected a number of different objects as their favourites for various reasons relating to both the aesthetics and the stories behind them:

- Swords – “cos people actually died with them”
- Gold Veil – “because it was shiny and it looked cool”
- Candle Holder – “it was shaped like a shell and was all different colours”
- Feasting Bowl – “because of the wee monkey on it, it was cute”
- Rosetta Stone – “cos I like the idea of the puzzles”
- Canopic Jars – “because they put organs in these jars and sealed them shut”
- “the hieroglyphic stones were amazing”
- “the wee Japanese robot”

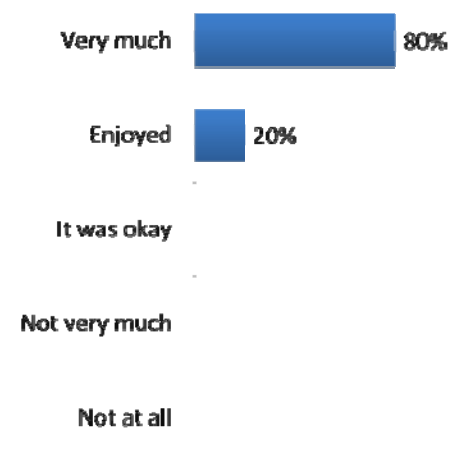
It is clear from the comments and the way in which the young people spoke on camera that the experience of being involved with object selection at the GMRC was an enjoyable one which engaged them and perhaps challenged some of their perceptions about museums.

2.1.4 Individuals

Feedback was collected at a series of workshops under the ‘Let Glasgow Flourish’ banner. The workshops took place in November 2009, February 2010, June 2010 and March 2011.

In total 61 responses were received from the 10 workshops. All respondents were asked about the extent to which they enjoyed the event with the following response:

Q. Did you enjoy the event today?



This positive view of the event overall is further highlighted in the words participants used to describe the events. Respondents from the various 'Let Glasgow Flourish' events were asked to give three words to describe their experience. As highlighted in the diagram below, the most commonly used words were interesting and informative; followed by fun, friendly and inspiring.



Comments from the feedback forms show that the positive experience at these events was focused around three main areas:

- Social interaction – participants very much appreciated the opportunity to spend time with others and to meet new people
- Stories about objects – both in terms of the personal associations and memories shared between participants and gaining more information about the objects themselves
- Museum visit – many had not visited the GMRC or other museums before and were interested and surprised at the vast collections held

There were a number of other comments specifically relating to ESOL teaching which highlighted that the participants in that event appreciated the opportunity to discuss developing and deepening working relationships and collaboration with Glasgow Museums and were also keen on the development of handling kits that they could use themselves.

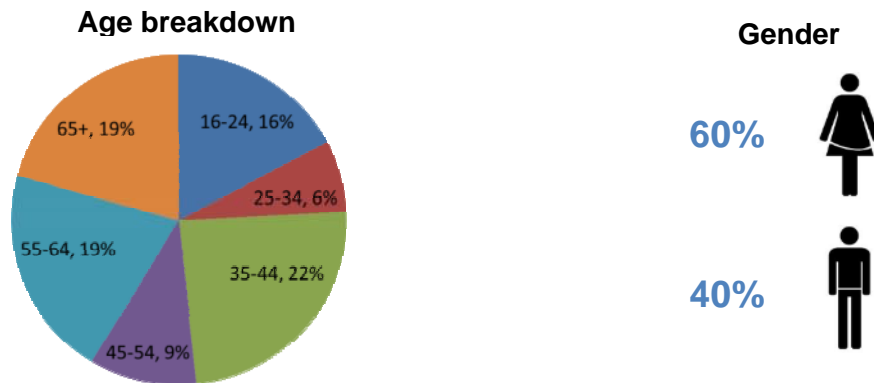
Although the feedback forms asked participants at the different sessions to highlight what they liked least and what they would change, the overwhelming response was that nothing needed to be changed and the aspect liked least was the end of the session. A few comments were made about improving practical aspects such as the room used (which lacked air conditioning), but it is clear that the overall response to these sessions was hugely positive.



2.2 Exhibition Visitor Profile

Researchers spoke to 46 visitors during the accompanied visits research phase. Although visitors were selected at random to participate in the research, there was a natural tendency for those spending more time in the exhibition and those confident in spoken English to participate.

Visitor profile was skewed towards females and older age groups, particularly on weekdays, with a broader mix at weekends.



Although not explicitly recorded, researchers estimate that around half of visitors who took part in the research were from the Glasgow area whilst the remainder were from other parts of Scotland and the UK or from overseas (Ireland, USA, China, Luxembourg and Canada).

Analysis of entries in the visitor book suggests that across the life of the exhibition, visitors came from a wide range of locations, as shown in the diagram below.



The majority of visitors who participated in the research came in couples, although there were differences at either end of the age spectrum with younger visitors more likely to come in small groups and older visitors coming alone.

2.3 Reason for Visit

The main reasons visitors attended the Curious Exhibition were, in order of importance, as follows:

1. Visited Glasgow Cathedral or the Necropolis and stumbled upon St Mungo Museum (often due to the café or toilets)
2. Had visited St Mungo Museum before and came again with friends / relatives
3. The museum was mentioned on a city bus tour and visitors either hopped off there and then or came back later to visit
4. Specifically planned to visit St Mungo museum for the first time, attracted by the religious theme

It is important to note that the reasons for visiting as outlined above relate to St Mungo Museum, as that was the attraction, rather than the Curious Exhibition itself. In fact, only two visitors had heard anything about the Curious Exhibition prior to setting foot inside the exhibition space. This suggests that the promotion of the exhibition both inside and outside St Mungo Museum did not create high levels of awareness about the Curious Project.

Just one of the 46 visitors who participated in the research knew anything about the Curious Exhibition prior to visiting. She had looked online to find an activity for a day out for herself and her boyfriend and had stumbled upon the Curious Exhibition. Even then, the exhibition itself was not the main reason for visiting – the respondent had previously visited St Mungo Museum some years before with her parents and wanted to visit again to see if it was as she remembered.

2.4 Engagement with the Curious Exhibition

Based on the interviews conducted over five days in the exhibition, researchers noted two key factors which influenced time spent in the exhibition and were also important in determining levels of overall engagement:

- Whether or not the visitor was drawn to a specific item in the collection
- The amount of time available for their visit

There were no obvious demographic differences between those who spent more time in the exhibition and those who spent less, however not surprisingly the amount of time spent in the exhibition space was closely correlated with visitor engagement levels. Broadly speaking therefore visitors can be categorised into the following three groups:

1. Those who had an in-depth level of engagement with the exhibition – c.5-6 of the 46 interviewed, these visitors spent up to 20 minutes in the Curious Exhibition, often initially attracted by one or two key objects, then progressively drawn in by other objects and ultimately the overall theme.
2. Those who engaged with one or two objects – c.20 of the visitors interviewed fell into this category, spending up to 10 minutes in the exhibition space. They were primarily attracted to one object (often the typewriter) and spent time reliving their own personal memories connected with that object. Some went on to identify another key object that they connected with (such as the tea set or radio) but this group tended not to grasp the overall Curious theme.
3. Those who had limited engagement with the exhibition – c.20 of those interviewed spent very little time in the exhibition. This group tended to take a cursory look around the exhibition without finding anything that immediately caught their attention. This was partly attributed to the lack of noticeable religious connection and partly to an unwillingness to spend time understanding the context and theme of the exhibition.

Over the five days of interviewing, researchers gave anecdotal feedback based on their observation of visit patterns within the Curious Exhibition. They noted that a high proportion of visitors quickly passed through the exhibition, spending only a few minutes in the space. It is important to note that this was not based on a robust count of visitors and we cannot confidently say that this behaviour was representative of all visitors to this exhibition.

2.4.1 Motivations and Barriers to Engagement

For most visitors, the Curious Exhibition was quite unlike any other exhibition they had visited which was both an attraction and a barrier. Some visitors embraced the difference and really engaged with the experience, finding the approach refreshing and absorbing whilst others were unsure how they were 'meant' to interpret the exhibition and therefore how to respond to it.



2.4.2 Motivations

The main motivation to engage with the Curious Exhibition was the objects themselves. Some of the objects were immediately attractive to visitors and drew them in to the exhibition as a whole, whilst others found one or two objects of interest and left after looking at these.

There were a number of specific objects within the exhibition which proved particularly attractive for visitors, as shown below.

Immediate Personal Connection	Provoked Curiosity	Specific or Aesthetic Interest
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typewriter • Radio • Tea set 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Butter churn • Broom • Warri board • Mexican miniature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wedding chest • Necklace • Musical instrument • Tinga Tinga paintings

Within these categories the connection was clear:

- *Immediate Personal Connection* – these objects evoked personal memories from visitors, and prompted a sharing of stories with one another as they looked around the exhibition. Although the personal connection was the strongest draw, it is no coincidence that these most popular items were also interactive. For some, the

attraction to one of these single objects was the springboard for wider engagement with the exhibition. For most visitors however these were the only objects they connected with in the exhibition. This is partly due to the fact that in looking beyond the typewriter, radio or tea set there was little else that these visitors immediately recognised or that caught their attention. For some however, lack of time meant that they focused on the few items they found most relevant, then left the exhibition.



"This radio just makes me think of my grandparents...they had a big sideboard with a radio just like that inside."

"As I was playing with the typewriter images of my childhood flashed through my head. It was a really visceral experience."

"The typewriter and the tea set were good because they brought back memories of my childhood but nothing else really interested me."

"I liked the typewriter....but that's all."



"I was drawn more to the 'English' objects like the tea set which I have a personal connection with as they are comforting and familiar."

"I like the little tea set, it makes me think of my childhood teddy bear picnics."

"The tea party set is cute....nothing else really caught my attention."

- *Provoked Curiosity* – visitors found these objects interesting either because they were unsure what the objects were and wanted to find out more, or because the audio-visual displays attracted their attention or because the stories surrounding these objects were interesting. In many cases these objects did not inspire much thought on the broader themes of different cultures and customs.

"It's interesting that people here have a different response to the Marquez. Back home (USA) it's a very common object so it's interesting to see it described as macabre".

"I find it really interesting that the woman had an immediate connection with the Warri Board, I really want to know why."

"I didn't expect to see a broom in a museum so I was attracted to that to find out why it was here."

- *Specific / Aesthetic Interest* – these objects were picked out by some visitors who had a particular connection with them. For some this was about their own past and memories, for others their interest was caught by some aspect of the object or story. Interestingly, these often made more of a connection with visitors than the objects in the 'curiosity' category, causing visitors to think about other cultures.



"I've just done an art project with my class on African art, so it's amazing to see the Tinga Tinga painting here."

"I found it striking that objects like the necklace could evoke such strong emotions in people."

Beyond the objects the other motivation to engage with the exhibition was simply availability of time. Those who were on a more relaxed schedule tended to take more time looking around the exhibition, whilst those with less available time looked for one or two key objects then left.

2.4.3 Barriers

The biggest barrier to engagement was lack of clarity. This manifested itself in two ways:

- Lack of comprehension on how the objects related to one another
- Lack of understanding of how the Curious Exhibition fitted into the religious themes of St Mungo Museum

Many visitors felt that the exhibition was simply a collection of “random objects” without a narrative to connect them. Although this was not a quantitative exercise, researchers estimate that around 35 of the 46 visitors interviewed felt this way.

“It was all very different so I wasn’t really able to learn anything.”

“I like the randomness of it but it took me much longer than normal to figure out that there was a theme.”

“I don’t get it...what is the exhibition meant to be about? I find it scattered...it just doesn’t hang together.”

“I didn’t think of it as an exhibition really...there was no connection between the objects.”

“There’s nothing to link the objects together.”

“It’s just a random collection of curious objects, but I like that.”

This encouraged visitors to seize upon a single object that they recognised and could relate to, and dismiss the rest as the connection was not immediately obvious. In practise this meant that the typewriter was the only object that some visitors saw within the exhibition. This also meant that for some visitors the exhibition seemed ‘trivial’, comprised of everyday objects that they wouldn’t expect to be in a museum.

“Some of the things on display aren’t even that old.”

“I used to have a typewriter like that so it seems odd to see it in a museum.”

“You can go to lots of places to see a tea set.”

The name ‘Curious’ did not help to enlighten those who were uncertain about the exhibition’s theme. Those who mentioned this as an issue were asked to suggest alternatives and “connections”, “your world” and “small world” were all mentioned as being potentially clearer.

“Curious about what? I wish I knew.”

The lack of clarity relating to the exhibition in the context of St Mungo Museum caused real confusion for some visitors who struggled to attach religious connotations to the objects within the Curious Exhibition. This resulted in some being left with a sense of frustration as they felt they had failed to understand the exhibition, which was at odds with their positive experience in the museum as a whole.

“Why’s the typewriter here? It seems out of place and doesn’t fit with the religious themes of the

“What does the assassination of Kennedy have to do with religion....or is it trying to highlight that there’s evil in the world?”

“Interesting but it would be better if it related with religions.”

Information and signage was another issue that contributed to a lack of engagement with the exhibition. As mentioned previously, very few visitors knew anything about the Curious Exhibition before arriving in the exhibition space. It was suggested that more obvious promotion of this special exhibition and its purpose elsewhere in and around St Mungo Museum would have helped to create interest and set context for visitors.

In the exhibition itself, the introductory board explaining about the exhibition and how it was curated was missed by many (estimated to be around 70% based on the observations of researchers) which meant again that important context was missing from their visit. This was partly due to the fact that most visitors (around 80% based on observations) entered the exhibition from the gallery below, so did not immediately see the introductory board. It was also partly due to the strong draw of key exhibits such as the typewriter, which took visitors past the explanatory board. Had the introductory board been in a more prominent position, it would undoubtedly have aided understanding of the context and background to the Curious Exhibition.

In addition, upon discussion around the Olympic and Commonwealth Games legacy theme it was felt that this connection could have been made much clearer within the exhibition, as visitors generally found it extremely interesting. That said, the timing of the interviews, shortly after the end of the Olympic Games is likely to have resulted in a greater emphasis being placed on interest in the Olympic connection. In fact, the majority of visitors were very engaged with the core idea of inspiring intercultural dialogue and understanding, which was clearly viewed as relevant regardless of the sporting connection.



2.5 Overall View of Exhibition

Most visitors included in the research enjoyed their time in the exhibition, largely due to seeing objects that invoked personal memories for them. Those who really engaged with the theme were particularly positive about having been prompted to reflect on the similarities between their own and other cultures.

"It really makes you think...about many things...for me mainly how similar we all are"

"I like the quirkiness and that the aim is to make you think and possibly alter the way you relate to the world."

The diagram below shows the main words used to describe the exhibition in the visitor comments book, and highlights the positive experience had by most visitors.



It is worth noting that the comments taken from the visitor book were generally more positive than the feedback received from those interviewed in person. This is likely to be due to the increased propensity of people who enjoyed the exhibition to take the time to write a comment in the visitor book.

2.5.1 Presentation and Style

While the fact that the exhibition space was uncluttered and streamlined was a real positive to some, others considered it a bit sparse and lacking in substance. Those who engaged more fully with the exhibition would have liked more space to sit and look and reflect, so although there was a seating area for 3 or 4 people in the response space, a seat at the typewriter, and a seat for children at the tea set, more seating would have been appreciated.

"I like the fact that there's not too much stuff, not too much to take in at once and there's room to move around."

*"More seating so you
can take time to reflect
and look."*

Some mentioned the fact that the exhibition was largely 'hands-off' with few opportunities to touch objects and interact with them, and indeed the objects which were most popular with visitors were those which were more interactive (there were two manual interactives – tea set and typewriter – and a flicker interactive). The use of glass cabinets also made the exhibition seem a little inaccessible for some, whilst others felt that the cabinets looked very temporary.

"The cabinets make it look less approachable and it's a bit off-putting that you can't really touch anything."

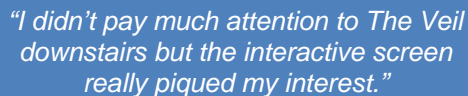
"The cabinets don't look permanent; it's as if they've been thrown up in a hurry."

"It looks a bit too modern...like IKEA."

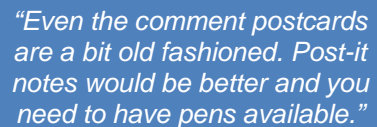
"I think it would be improved if some objects were touchable as people relate to tactile memories as well as visual and audio."

For thirty objects, there were five interpretive films (veil, Tinga Tinga, door, warri board/bottle, broom) three pieces of audio (kissar, typewriter and radio) and two manual interactives (tea set and typewriter). These video and audio aspects helped to a degree and for visitors who were more engaged with the exhibition they served to enhance the experience by bringing the exhibits to life.

However, most visitors would have preferred to see a greater deal of interactivity, either from the inclusion of more objects that could be picked up and touched or a greater number of stories brought to life audio-visually.



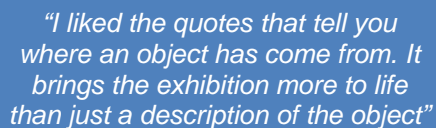
"I didn't pay much attention to The Veil downstairs but the interactive screen really piqued my interest."



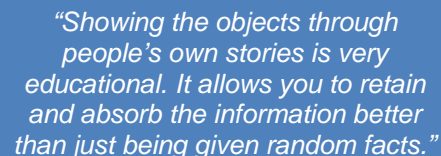
"Even the comment postcards are a bit old fashioned. Post-it notes would be better and you need to have pens available."

2.5.2 Personal Response Led Approach

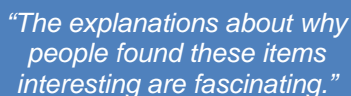
The personal response led approach was hugely engaging for many, either due to the audio-visual devices which helped to bring objects to life (e.g. the broom and the musical instrument) or through the personal stories and memories that the objects conjured up in visitors themselves.



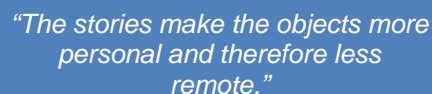
"I liked the quotes that tell you where an object has come from. It brings the exhibition more to life than just a description of the object"



"Showing the objects through people's own stories is very educational. It allows you to retain and absorb the information better than just being given random facts."

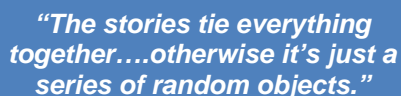


"The explanations about why people found these items interesting are fascinating."



"The stories make the objects more personal and therefore less remote."

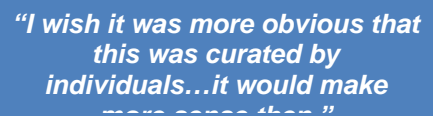
That said, relying mainly on a personal response based approach to curation was one of the barriers to visitors really engaging and spending time in the exhibition. As discussed previously, for many there were no obvious links between objects and they struggled to make the links between their own stories and those of the people who selected each object.



"The stories tie everything together....otherwise it's just a series of random objects."



"The issue is the missing theme."



"I wish it was more obvious that this was curated by individuals...it would make more sense than "

Virtually every visitor who participated in the research commented that additional information would have been useful in helping their understanding of the exhibition as a whole. In some instances this was driven by a desire to know more about an object or to see images of it being used in situ, but mostly it was related to setting out the overall theme of the exhibition in a clearer and more visible way. It is important to note that the desire for further information was not about facts; visitors were keen to hear more about the object's story and the place it had in different peoples' lives. An example of this is the warri board – although there was an audio visual presentation about the warri board which included one participant instructing another in how to play the game and talking about his memories of doing so, visitors expressed a desire to know how to actually play the game; who played it and when they played it.

"I'd like to know how that warri game is played and maybe what games it is like that I would have played and maybe a little printed sheet to take away that shows me how to make my own game and the rules...that would be interesting."

"The musical instrument could do with some more context. The sound is good but it would be great to see a picture of someone playing it."

There was a sense that in order to decipher the themes of Curious, some effort was required on the part of the visitor, which many were not prepared to give.

"The visual things didn't start to make sense until I sat down and read the information folder."

"I liked the pictures, but just as art. The whole exhibition was too difficult to follow."

"We spent quite a long time trying to understand 'Curious'."

Some visitors suggested that the personal response led approach would be improved by grouping objects within simple themes to help give more of a hook for visitors to hold on to while trying to understand the overall messages. Based on the objects within the Curious Exhibition, some suggested themes were as follows:

- Music
- School
- Domestic life
- Wedding rituals
- Sport
- Rural life
- The cultures and influences that made Glasgow what it is today

2.6 Impact of Curious Exhibition on Visitors

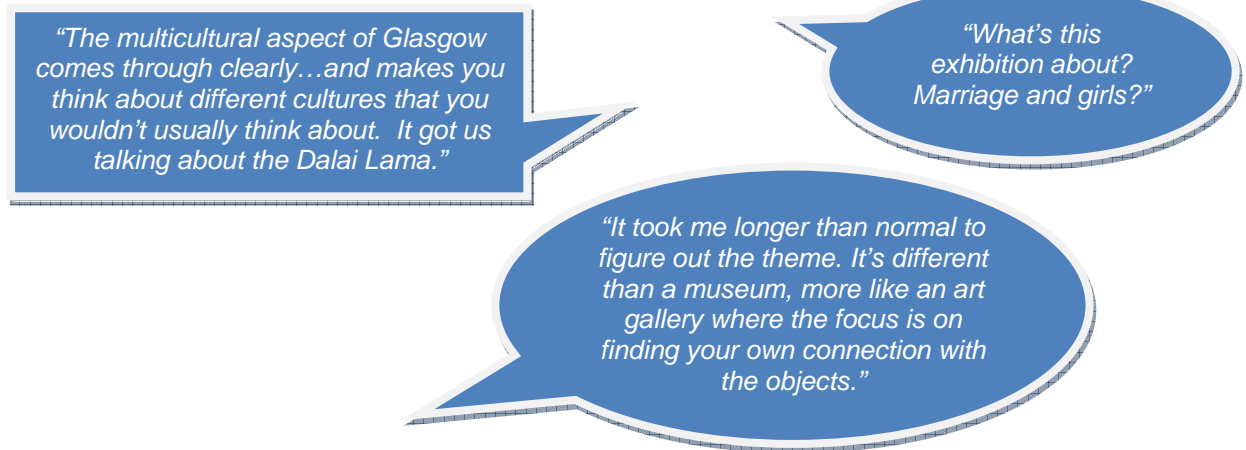
The impact of visiting the exhibition on visitors differed depending on their levels of engagement outlined in 2.4 above:

- *Those who had a limited level of engagement with the exhibition (c.20 of the 46 interviewed)* – very limited, viewed as just part of a day out
- *Engaged with 1 or 2 objects (c.20 of the 46 interviewed)* – personal memories were conjured up which stimulated discussion with others about things they remembered from childhood or earlier stages of their lives, which prompted a positive view of the exhibition
- *Those who had an in-depth level of engagement with the exhibition (c.5-6 of the 46 interviewed)* – left with a sense of having had views about other cultures challenged and expanded

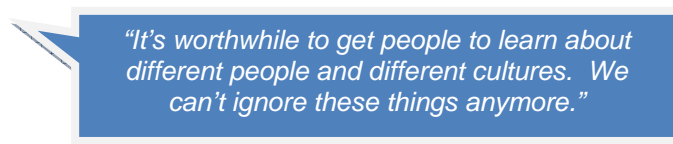
2.6.1 Understanding and Relevance of Curious Message

When prompted with information about the aims and objectives of the Curious Exhibition, almost all visitors were positive and supportive of the project and interested in what it was trying to achieve.

- For those who had already grasped what the exhibition was about, there was a universal endorsement that it had achieved its aims
- For some who had not previously grasped the concept, this explanation served as a 'light-bulb' moment and they too agreed that the exhibition had succeeded in showcasing cultural similarities and diversity
- For others, the explanation only served to highlight what they felt was missing from the exhibition, namely an overall narrative and a clearer link between objects.



Once explained to visitors, most felt that the Curious message was very relevant to their lives. The topic of inter-cultural integration was considered extremely important across the demographics. This was true even amongst those visitors who did not engage to any degree with the Curious Exhibition, suggesting that the concept and message did have broad appeal.



In addition, the link to the London 2012 Olympic Games and the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games brought a further sense of relevance, partly due to the recency and visibility of these events within the UK. This was felt to be a strong hook for visitors to connect with and it was suggested that setting the context of this legacy project clearly within the exhibition would have helped pique the interest of visitors and encourage greater understanding of the Curious themes. It is worth noting that the timing of the research (in August and September 2012) immediately following the Olympic Games is likely to have over-emphasised this connection.

2.6.2 Key Learnings & Takeouts

One of the most important learnings for visitors was in seeing a different perspective on countries and cultures that they had perhaps only heard about in the news before. The everyday nature of the objects made these countries seem more human, more real and not so distant or far removed from their own lives.

"There were lots of enlightening things...snippets about other people and cultures and religions."

"We associate Eritrea with terrible famines and the musical instrument gives a totally different perspective."

"Objects are more than just things; there are connections among the different objects from different cultures."

"Memories rekindled. Thoughts about how people live their lives in different places."

Another positive outcome was in challenging visitors' views about traditional museum exhibitions. Those who really engaged with the Curious Exhibition felt that the mix of everyday objects, real people and their stories, presented in an eclectic way was an excellent conduit to thinking about their own perceptions and stories.

"It made me feel good about my own diverse religious upbringing."

Those who did not really engage with the exhibition found it more difficult to identify something they would take away from the exhibition.

"I don't think I'll remember the place in a month."

Overall, it was felt that had the aims and objectives of the Curious Exhibition been clearer to visitors, greater impact would have been achieved for a larger proportion of visitors.

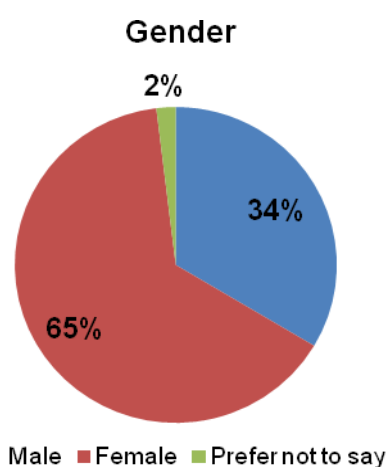


3 Curious Learning Programme

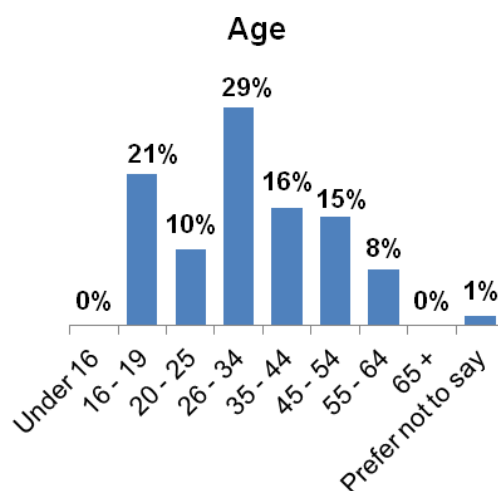
3.1 Profile of Participants

During the course of the learning programme, information was gathered on the profile of participants and their overall thoughts of the sessions and includes data from ESOL groups, other groups and individuals. A total of 157 responses were gathered, although the base size of each question fluctuates slightly due to the self-completion method used.

As can be seen in the chart below, this data shows that those who participated in the learning programme were predominantly female (65%). This was particularly pronounced amongst individuals, 76% of whom were female whilst the ESOL groups had a more even gender split with 56% female.



Base: 155

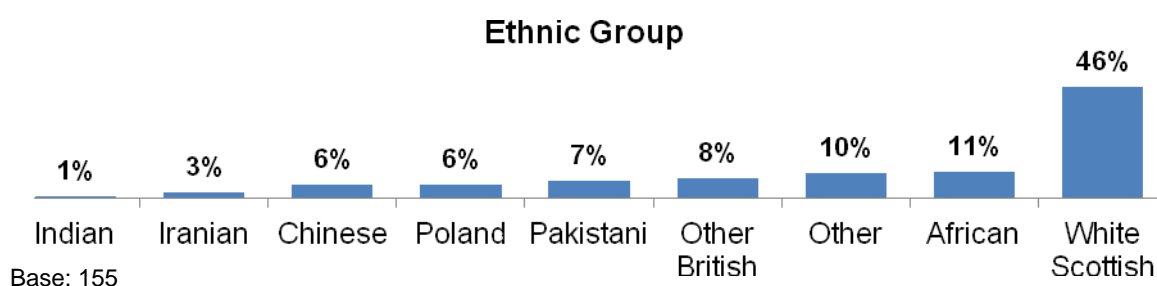


Base: 156

Learning Programme participants spanned the age ranges, as can be seen in the chart above, with just under a third aged between 16 and 25 years old, a further 29% aged 26-34 years and the remainder between 35 and 64 years old. The age profile differed slightly between the different participant groups:

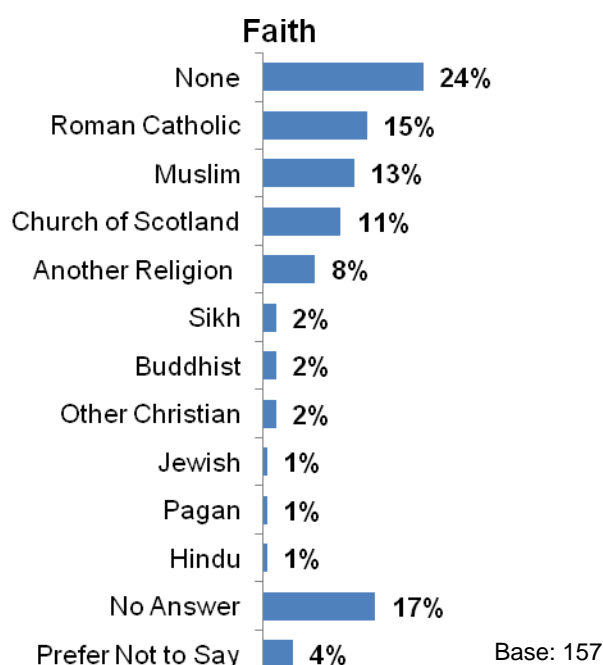
- ESOL groups tended towards the 26-44 year age bands (66%)
- Other groups were skewed towards younger participants with just over half aged between 16 and 19 years (56%)
- Individuals were fairly evenly spread across the age groups from 26 years upwards, with very few (6%) aged under 25.

Just under half of participants were of White Scottish ethnic origin, with the remainder from a range of other ethnic groups.

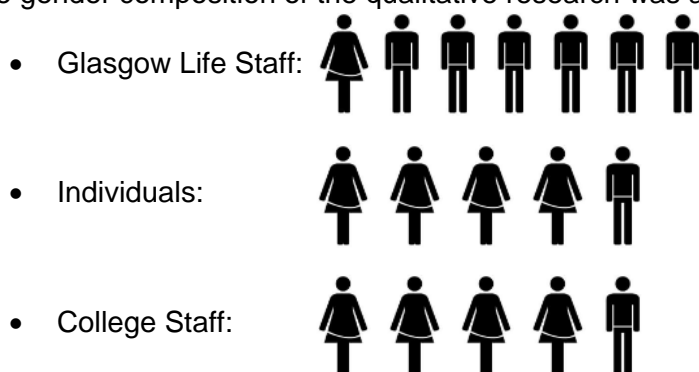


The other groups (94%) and individuals (59%) were skewed towards those of White Scottish origin, whilst the ESOL groups principally comprised participants of African (25%), Polish (13%), Pakistani (12%) and Chinese (12%) origin.

Participants in the Learning Programme were also asked about their faith – a question which was left unanswered by around a fifth. Amongst those who did state their faith, Roman Catholic, Muslim and Church of Scotland were the most frequently mentioned. A quarter of participants said they did not practice any faith.



Various strands of qualitative research were undertaken on the Learning Programme for this evaluation comprising group discussions and in-depth interviews with participants and tutors. The gender composition of the qualitative research was as follows:



- Students:



3.2 Background to Attending

Participants in the qualitative evaluation became aware of the Curious Learning Programme in a number of different ways:

- Through 'outreach' work by the Curious Team – either by personal visits to workplaces, partner organisations and colleges, or by email mailings
- Word of mouth recommendation
- Through their employer

Few fully understood what the Learning Programme was about until they either attended the pilot session, or the actual Learning Programme session itself. Although this was not a major issue, and participants were happy to attend with open minds, there was some suggestion that greater clarity around what would actually happen during the sessions would have been appreciated.

"All we were told was that the programme would be about cross cultural dialogue and diversity and that it was broadly linked to the Commonwealth Games."

All were interested in the general concept of exploring the themes of cultural integration and diversity either from a work perspective or relating to cultural organisations or groups that they were part of. In addition, the ability to tailor the sessions for specific groups and the flexibility offered in doing this by the Curious Team was motivating to tutors and group leaders, as was the opportunity to bring their own groups together in a different setting. The latter point was a particular attraction for ESOL tutors who were keen to get students exposed to native English speakers in a new setting, outside the classroom.

"I saw it as a way for the students to get to know each other and feel comfortable with each other."

"The impetus was about getting the class out to do something more fun....and for students to hear someone else instead of just me."

"The programme creates a space to talk about things"

The taster or pilot sessions seemed to work particularly well in inspiring college tutors and group leaders to bring groups to the full programme. The potential for sharing, breaking down barriers and learning more about one another were apparent from these initial sessions, and they definitely captured the imagination of attendees who then sought out ways to fit the Learning Programme sessions into their own teaching curriculum or group activities.

3.3 Organisation and Administration

Participants and group organisers thought that the administration and organisation of the Learning Programme was very good. Many of the positive comments about this stemmed from the level of flexibility offered by the Curious Team. Tutors and college staff particularly appreciated the opportunity to have sessions tailored to the specific needs of their students whilst other groups worked collaboratively with the Team to pull out elements of the Learning Programme that best suited their objectives and incorporated these to wider events and learning sessions.

"I felt Curious were interested in our specific requirements and understood that 16-19 year olds were quite a different group than just adults."

"It was well organised with clear good communications"

"The organisation was fine...they were very accommodating to our needs."

The option of running the Learning Programme in one or two sessions was also very appealing for some and added to the sense of being able to tailor the programme to individual group's needs.

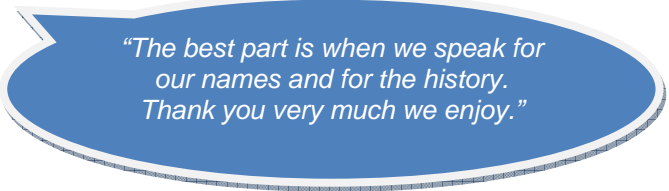
All tutors and group leaders who were involved in liaising with the Curious Team were very positive about the collaborative approach taken by the team and highly praised the experience of working together.

3.4 Content and Delivery

Both the content and delivery of the Curious Learning Programme were universally praised by participants and group leaders.

Whilst the detailed content of the Learning Programme was not explored in depth within the evaluation, participants spontaneously mentioned key exercises as being particularly valuable including:


- Where names come from
- Giant map exercise



"The best part is when we speak for our names and for the history. Thank you very much we enjoy."

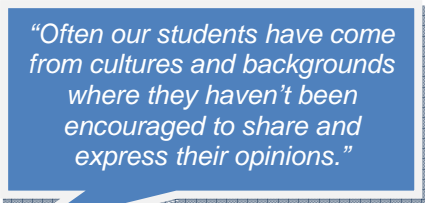
Both of these exercises got straight to the core of the Curious Project's aims of creating inter-cultural dialogue whilst at the same time breaking the ice between participants and enabling them to share information about themselves in a non-threatening environment, which then opened up the possibility of greater sharing throughout the remainder of the sessions.

More than any other element of the Curious Project, the Learning Programme delivered an important understanding of Glasgow and its particular character. ESOL tutors felt that this was one of the most important aspects of the programme as it really highlighted to their students that Glasgow was a truly multicultural society and had evolved through immigrants from many countries settling and integrating into city life, which gave the students comfort that they were not the first or only people in that situation and hope that they too could become part of the fabric of the city.

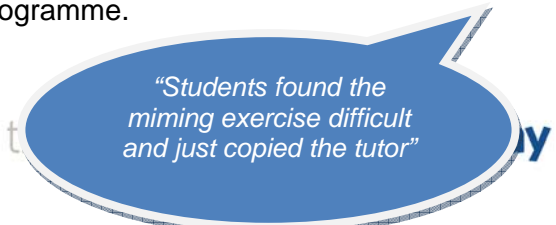


"I know Glasgow's story now. It was a good time of culture. I enjoyed share my culture"

The drama and mime elements of the programme were praised by participants in younger age groups whilst some of the ESOL students found it difficult. This was part of a theme raised by one tutor who took a group of students who had recently joined the language class and whose English language skills were at a very low level. They felt that as the lower level language students were used to a very structured form of learning, they found it difficult to adapt to some of the exercises which involved much more interaction and discussion, and in general were unused to the facilitative approach to the Learning Programme.



"Often our students have come from cultures and backgrounds where they haven't been encouraged to share and express their opinions."



"Students found the miming exercise difficult and just copied the tutor"

This was also true in the second session which involved discussing the objects in the exhibition and what they meant to each individual. The lower language level students found it difficult to participate in this activity as they were afraid of speaking out and giving the 'wrong' answer.

For the majority of participants, however, the facilitative approach to delivery of the Learning Programme was fully endorsed. It was considered to be extremely engaging and interesting and created an atmosphere where people felt safe and confident to be open about their thoughts and feelings.

Many participants were used to this style of learning and several of the tutors reported that they used such exercises and techniques themselves with their students. Some individuals were less familiar with this approach and initially unsure about what seemed like a lack of structure, but soon became enthusiastic about having the opportunity to explore their own views, perceptions and in some cases prejudices in a safe and positive environment. Indeed, the fact that participants were guided to think for themselves was the key element that led to them having a positive experience overall.

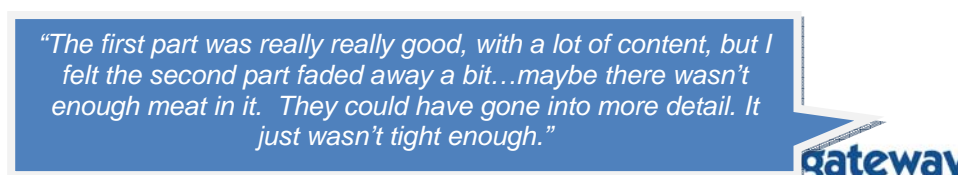
The facilitators themselves were very highly praised for their warmth and skill in making everyone feel comfortable and in creating an environment where everyone was on a level playing field, there were no hierarchies and people felt that they were free to express themselves openly.



The only aspect of the Learning Programme that attracted any level of criticism was the session in the Curious Exhibition itself. For some participants the size and scope of the exhibition were considered too limited and presentation of the objects had a temporary feel.



This led to a feeling that the more valuable session was the first one and participants felt they got more out of the exercises such as the names exercise and drama elements (for some) and the historical discussions about immigration to Glasgow, rather than the object discussion.



That said, some of the college tutors did mention that the concept of structuring some of the discussion and exploration of cross-cultural themes through objects was a good one, and were keen to find ways of working with Glasgow Museums to create an object handling kit to use in their own classrooms.

"It would be good to bring some of the objects into the classroom and explore language through them."

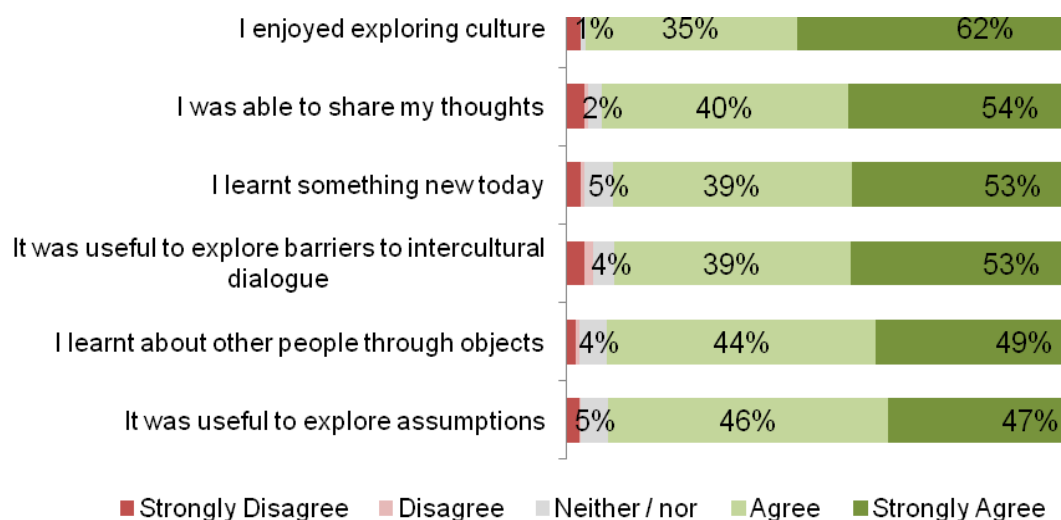
The one thing that several participants, particularly ESOL tutors, felt was missing from the programme was greater exposure to people from different cultures during the sessions. They felt that putting together groups of their students with groups of Scottish or British people would have greatly added to the impact of the Learning Programme by allowing students to experience cultural integration in a meaningful way.

"More integration with other Scottish students or Glaswegians would be good to help break down deeply held barriers."

One other minor criticism related to the timings – for some participants it felt that the sessions were tight for time, with too much being covered, particularly for individual groups. This was essentially due to their engagement in the sessions and keenness to explore and discuss some of the key themes in greater depth. As mentioned previously, some also thought the timings were a little slow in the object session, with not quite enough content or depth of coverage.

3.5 Benefits and Impact of Attending

The Learning Programme was felt to be of value and helpful for both the personal and professional lives of almost all attendees. Data collected through evaluation forms completed at the end of the learning programme highlights the range of positive elements highlighted by participants.



Base: 338-342

Participants clearly learned new things through the Learning Programme, whether about themselves or others, and the experience encouraged them to think in a different way about their assumptions.

"I found today very informative and worthwhile. I've learned many things about different cultures and the reasons for why they might clash."

"I want to say thank you about what we learned last two week. We had to know a lot of thing like how we can share the culture, the history and how can accept the people and we have information about Glasgow history and what kind of people here."

The comments made by individuals and groups at the end of the Learning Programme show the highlights of the sessions which were clearly viewed as interesting, different and enjoyable. Attendees clearly felt that the programme enabled them to learn, share ideas and explore different cultures.

"Really enjoyable. Insightful, a fun opportunity to work and learn a bit more about something that I wouldn't normally think about."



The descriptors used by students and ESOL groups were extremely similar to those of individuals and other groups. The opportunity to learn about different cultures was also a key feature for these attendees.



Feedback from nurses who attended the programme was framed in a slightly different way. Their responses to the question ‘What did you gain from today and how does it relate to your nursing practice?’ are shown in the diagram below.



This clearly shows that attending the Learning Programme had real relevance for their jobs, in terms of communication and encouraging teamwork, but also in helping them to understand more about different cultures and cultural barriers.

"The awareness that everyone is different and will look at situations from a different perspective. It enhances the need to always be open-minded when caring for patients."

"A better understanding of barriers and overcoming them. This can help facilitate better communication and understanding."

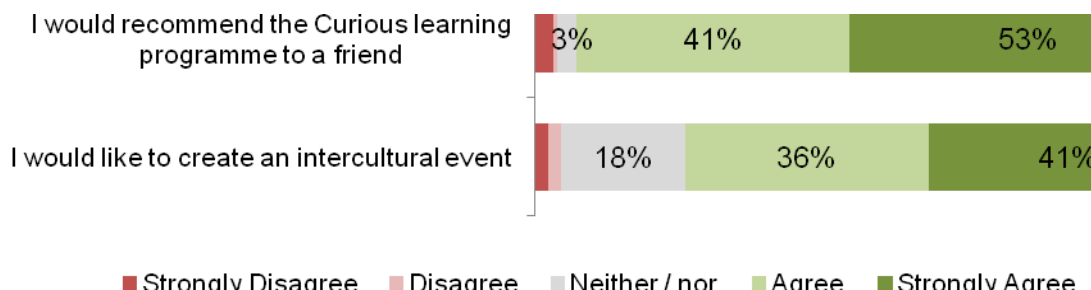
"To stop and think more about barriers in practice and not to assume. Think of other fears and cultural differences as they are not the same as mine."

3.6 Anticipated Legacy

There is evidence that the impact of attending the Learning Programme went beyond what was felt and experienced on the day. Feedback provided through postcard comments after the event from 58 participants showed that since attending the Curious Learning Programme 43% said they had become more interested in different cultures and 33% had shared their culture. A further quarter said they had thought more about the topics covered including:

- Different people
- My culture
- Cultures
- Being connected
- I think about different cultures
- My neighbours
- What to do in events
- Everything I learned on the course
- Difference
- Scotland's culture
- Glasgow history

In addition, evaluation responses highlighted practical actions that participants would take in response to attending the Learning Programme, with 94% saying they would recommend the programme to a friend and 77% saying they would like to create an event of their own.



Base: 338/336

ESOL tutors recognised the lasting impact that activities such as the Curious Learning Programme have on their students such as:

- Building awareness of the city
- Increasing confidence to participate in activities outside college
- Increasing willingness to help one another within their own communities (an example was given of one student who spoke better English than another going along to help speak to their GP)

"Ultimately I hope that our students will have gained confidence to take volunteering on, for the Commonwealth Games and other opportunities."

Further impacts have been seen in the development of closer collaborative working relationships between Glasgow Museums and some of the colleges in Glasgow, in particular the City of Glasgow College. The deepening of this relationship, including through projects like Curious has led to the establishment of a 'language café' in St Mungo Museum which has been very successful and short-listed for a prestigious award for the college.

"The assessors were blown away by the partnership approach where both parties are clearly benefiting."

In addition, tutors were keen to try to use some of the exercises with their own students and most felt comfortable with the idea of using the techniques and facilitative style in their own classrooms.

From the perspective of individuals and Glasgow Life staff who participated in the evaluation, although they found the Learning Programme sessions extremely interesting and thought-provoking, they were unsure about what the lasting impact would be on them personally or professionally. Indeed, there was a suggestion that providing an information pack to take away at the end of the sessions giving suggestions about how to apply what they had learned to workplace and home situations would have been useful and would have helped to lengthen the impact of attending the programme.

Overall, the Learning Programme clearly delivered against its objectives, with a focus on the increased intercultural understanding as well as creating a greater appreciation of Glasgow's unique culture and history.

4 Curious Project Events

A number of events were organised by the Curious Team: feedback was collected at only a small number of the events. Views examined below were sought from participants at two of the key events – the Human Library and Working Songs.

4.1 Human Library

The Human Library¹ is an international project designed to produce dialogue, reduce prejudice and encourage understanding. As part of the Curious project various Human Libraries were delivered and supported. The following feedback was collected at the first Human Library delivered under the Curious Project.

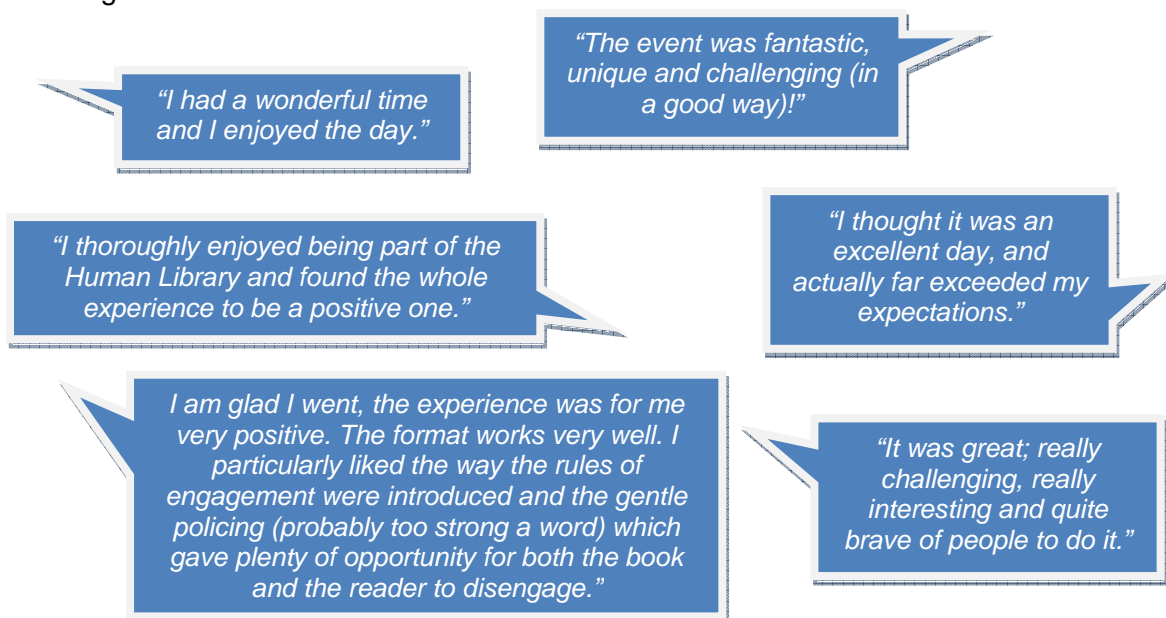
Feedback on the Human Library event took two main forms:

- Ad hoc emails sent to the organising team
- Short video interviews recorded at the event

Information contained within the Human Library emails confirms that there were 61 readers and 73 loans during the event. Readers selected from a range of books on offer, with some choosing more than one title. Books included:

- The Gypsy Traveller
- Without Papers
- Epileptic
- Butch Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Mixed Marriage

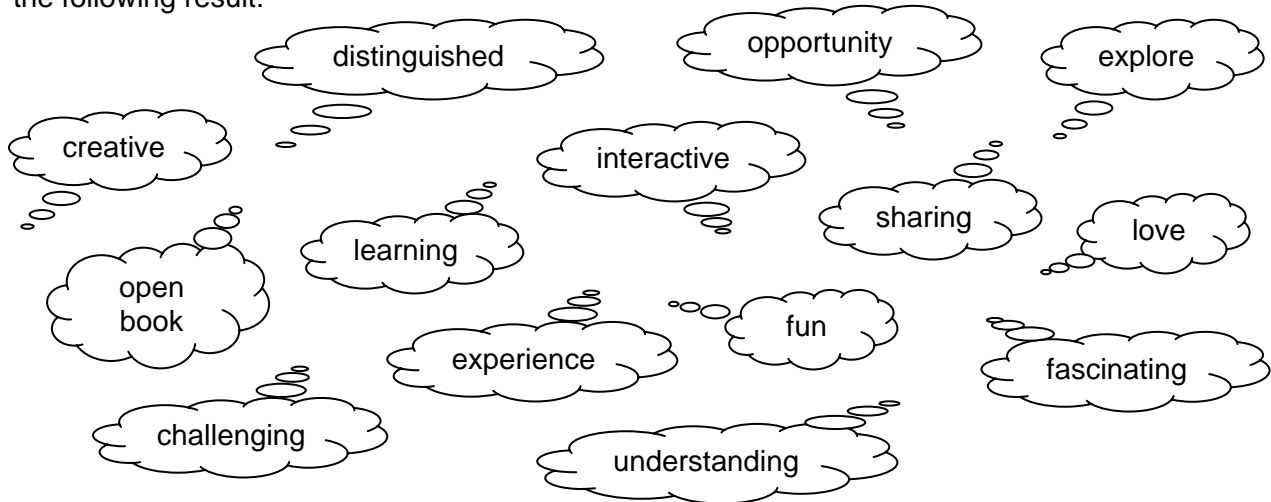
A number of positive comments were recorded from organisers and participants about the Human Library event which suggested that the event was both enjoyable and thought provoking for 'books' and 'readers'.



¹ For more information on the Human Library see www.humanlibrary.org

Participants who took part in the video interviews were equally positive in their praise of the event. 'Readers' spoke of the real benefits of being able to talk to a real person, ask questions and speak about topics that they may never have discussed before, whilst the 'books' were pleased to be able to give people a different perspective on the issues they covered.

Within the video interviews, participants were asked to describe the event in three words with the following result:



Participants agreed that talking and sharing within the event had made them think differently about prejudice. For some it invoked a realisation that prejudice still exists in many aspects of society based on simple things like where people are born and how they are brought up. Others expressed interest and surprise at the extent to which prejudice impacts on individual lives. The fact that the 'books' were willing to open up and talk about their experiences was considered to be quite unique and an excellent way of tackling topics that are generally considered taboo.

"I was really delighted to have the opportunity to talk about a topic like this [bisexual] that people don't usually have a chance to talk about."

"It's opened my eyes."

Several of those who provided feedback expressed a hope that the event could be run again in the future, either as it was or with other specific groups (e.g. LGBT) or within specific communities or areas (e.g. Easterhouse).

Some comments were made about possible improvements for the future, largely relating to the administration on the day:

- It would be good to have more books on offer
- Potential readers were approached several times, so a system of identifying event participants could be introduced
- The reserve list perhaps didn't work as planned
- The check in / check out process was not always followed

None of these minor issues had an impact on enjoyment of the day as summed up by the following quote: *"everyone seemed to accept the odd glitch in the machine with a smile and a philosophical shrug"*.

Overall, the event organisation and content were highly praised and participants clearly enjoyed the experience.

4.2 Working Songs

The working songs event was devised around songs that were sung by people all around the world when they were making butter. It was inspired by the butter churner on display as part of the Curious Exhibition.

Information sources which were fed into the evaluation were as follows:

- Comments from attendees about the event highlights
- Comments posted on the Curious Project blog
- Words used to describe the event
- Drawings in response to the event



This event was clearly very much enjoyed by those who attended. It brought together different cultures through song, and culminated in many joining in with dancing which was cited as being a real highlight of the event.

*"Indian song was sung nicely.
Santur was nicely played.
African music was good.
Dance was awesome."*

*"The music was very good. We
would have liked words to the
songs so we could join in."*

*"Nice to see so
many cultures
coming together."*

*"We enjoyed the whole event and loved Camille's
lively music in particular. We just could not
believe our eyes. He blew some life into the hall
and changed it from sitting down to everybody
jumping up in circles and line dances."*

*Loved the spontaneous dancing
with live music. Would love to
see more such events :)*



When asked to describe Working Songs in three words, the following responses were given which showcase the lively, happy atmosphere created at the event:

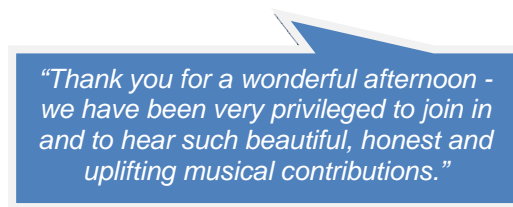


The attendees took different things away from the event, whether in terms of learning about different music, instruments and cultures; or in overcoming personal barriers and boundaries to participate, evidenced by them joining in with the dancing.



The event organisation and catering was also praised. The only suggestions for improvements were to increase the size of the room and advertise the event more widely to encourage more people to attend.

Several comments were made about organising more events like this, highlighting its overall success.

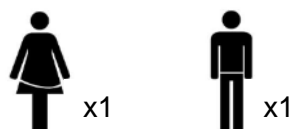


5 Volunteer Initiatives

5.1 Language Tour Volunteers

The difficulties in recruiting language tour volunteers documented earlier in this report resulted in two volunteers participating in the research. Both were contacted by telephone and were keen to share their experiences.

5.1.1 Respondent Profile



One respondent was originally from Afghanistan and one from Iran. One was an ESOL student at one of the Glasgow colleges; the other was a volunteer in a school prior to getting involved with the Curious Project.

5.1.2 Background to Involvement in Curious Project

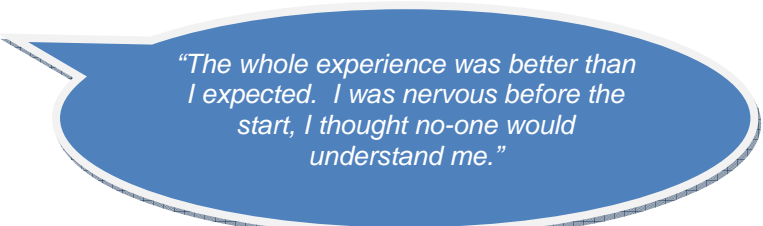
Both respondents were referred to the Curious Project by third parties namely the college and a volunteering organisation.

Their motivations for getting involved were slightly different but ultimately focused on working with English-speaking people:


- to improve English language skills;
- and to gain experience of working in Scotland to help towards getting a job

5.1.3 Highlights of Involvement

Both language tour volunteers were extremely positive about their experience. Having joined the project with specific personal objectives, they were soon engaged with the topic and concept of the Curious Project.



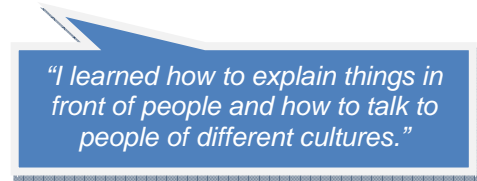
"The whole experience was better than I expected. I was nervous before the start, I thought no-one would understand me."



"It was a wonderful project and a great experience as a volunteer."

A particular highlight for both volunteers was in meeting and interacting with people from different cultures for two main reasons:

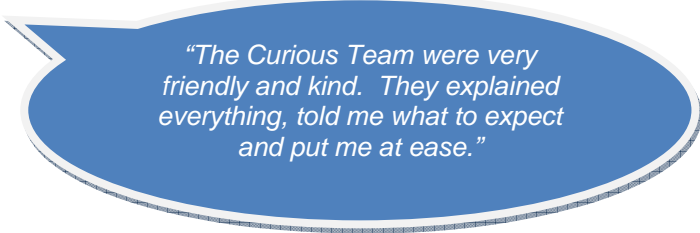
- the necessity of talking to many different people from different countries and backgrounds served to increase the confidence of the volunteers and demonstrate to them that they could interact comfortably with a wide range of different people (including Scots)
- the volunteers found the experience of exchanging stories valuable and enriching, and it encouraged them to think about changing society and the similarities between cultures (largely facilitated by discussions around the objects in the exhibition)



"I learned how to explain things in front of people and how to talk to people of different cultures."

Much of the positivity expressed by the language tour volunteers centred on the Curious Team who were highly praised. Their communication style and methods of interacting with the volunteers helped put them at ease in what was a potentially nerve-wracking situation. This was attributed to 3 key factors:

- Communications between volunteers and the Curious team were open and clear and built on mutual respect
- The team didn't laugh at language mistakes, instead encouraged volunteers to be better at language without focusing on the errors
- They clearly explained what would be required of volunteers at every step, ensuring that there was no uncertainty about what would be awaiting them when they arrived at the museum, helping to put the volunteers at ease



"The Curious Team were very friendly and kind. They explained everything, told me what to expect and put me at ease."

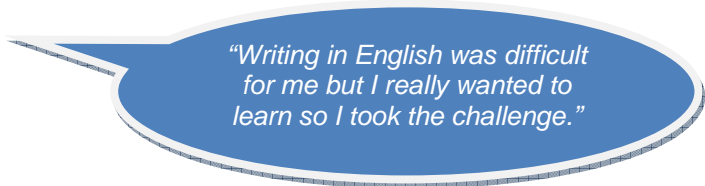
Neither of the language tour volunteers who participated in research had had much experience of museums prior to getting involved with the Curious Project. Indeed one had never been to a museum in Scotland. The impact of volunteering on their views of museums was clear – their perceptions were challenged about deeply held views on:

- People who work in museums
- People who visit museums
- The significance of and stories behind objects in museums

The result of these changes in perceptions of museums was to encourage them to visit other museums and for one of the volunteers to help out at St Mungo whenever possible.

5.1.4 Challenges and Overcoming Issues

The language tour volunteers struggled to identify any specific challenges or issues with the experience. The volunteer programme incorporated many different aspects, activities and tasks that they had never undertaken before, which meant that they initially viewed the whole experience as challenging. In addition, both indirectly expressed a lack of confidence about interacting with native English speakers and talking to people from different cultures.



"Writing in English was difficult for me but I really wanted to learn so I took the challenge."

The main challenge faced by one of the volunteers was a practical one – the amount of time required to travel to St Mungo Museum was at least one hour each way, which added to the 4 hours spent at the museum each time made for a long day. The provision of bus tickets made a significant difference, essentially acting as an enabler to participation, as both volunteers were on low incomes.

ESOL tutors who were involved with the learning programme felt that the volunteering opportunities were perhaps a little restricted, both in terms of the timings and the level of commitment required from volunteers.

The issue with timings related to a perception that volunteer opportunities were focused on Refugee Week and weekends in June, whereas they felt that presenting volunteer positions in

line with the timing of the learning programme would have encouraged more ESOL students to participate.

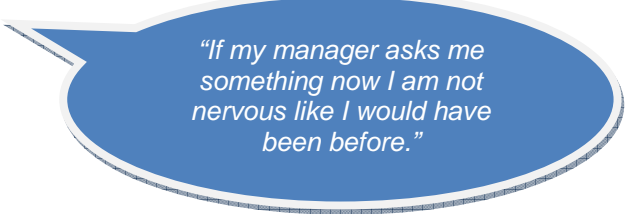
The issue relating to commitment levels came from a perception that the time that volunteers were required to input was 'a big ask' and the weekend participation a barrier particularly for younger students.

Structuring the volunteering opportunities in a slightly different way – having more available, shorter placements, and less onerous on volunteers – may have opened them up to a wider audience who could have gained valuable experience from volunteering.

5.1.5 Benefits and Impact of Participation


Both volunteers benefited hugely from the experience both personally and professionally. One of the volunteers, now in employment, credits his involvement in the Curious Project with preparing him for the workplace.

Although one of the main drivers to participate for both volunteers was to help improve their English to assist them to get a job, the impact of participation was far greater than that. The volunteers learned a great deal about what it means to work in Scotland – expectations of employers, integration with colleagues and interaction with customers/visitors. Ultimately this resulted in both volunteers feeling much more relaxed about working in the UK and comfortable in the working environment.



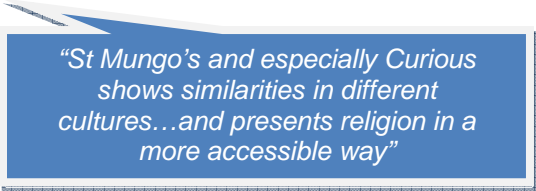
"If my manager asks me something now I am not nervous like I would have been before."

On a personal level, increasing confidence was also important and this stemmed largely from being exposed to different experiences, trying and successfully completing tasks that were initially well outside their comfort zones.



"Everything I experienced was beneficial especially confidence when talking to people, being able to write new things and how to integrate with people from different countries and cultures"

For one of the volunteers, the experience also caused a re-evaluation of her views on religion. St Mungo Museum presenting religion in such an open, accessible and interesting way was something that she could not imagine happening in her home country. She started the volunteer project with no real positive views on religion due to her belief that 'religion most of the time separates people from one another'. Through spending time at St Mungo Museum she felt her opinions change considerably.



"St Mungo's and especially Curious shows similarities in different cultures...and presents religion in a more accessible way"

5.1.6 Anticipated Legacy

The key tangible legacy for these volunteers was a personal one – in helping them gain employment, and ultimately 'leave to remain' in the UK.

However, the experience of working alongside Scottish people and interacting with visitors and other volunteers from different countries also left a legacy of cultural integration. The volunteers who participated in the research made strong friendships through the Curious Project, friendships with people they would previously not have engaged with. The volunteer experience therefore delivered on the key objective of the Curious Project.

Looking to the future, one of the tutors interviewed as part of the learning programme review felt that given the huge amount their students who did volunteer gained from the experience, there may be scope to roll out a wider volunteering programme specifically for ESOL students across the full range of properties and collections belonging to Glasgow Museums. It was suggested that students could be 'employed' to bring insight and stories to objects / paintings from their own countries.

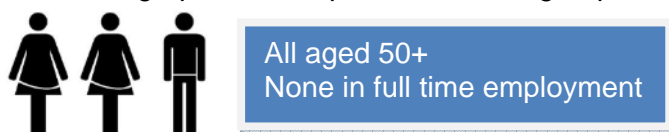
5.2 Event Volunteers

Feedback was gained through interviewing 3 events volunteers in a group discussion, as well as from a number of written sources provided by the Curious Project Team including personal stories and the output to a facilitated session with volunteers.

5.2.1 Respondent Profile

The 3 volunteers who participated in the discussion group considered themselves as relatively atypical of the full team of around 20 people who made up the event volunteers team. They regarded themselves as the most regular attendees and the volunteers who had committed most time to the events programme.

The demographics of respondents in the group were as follows:



It is understood that the full events team was comprised of volunteers from a variety of cultural backgrounds and demographic groups including parents of young children, students and asylum seekers. This was thought to have contributed to their lower levels of involvement in the project given their additional home and work responsibilities.

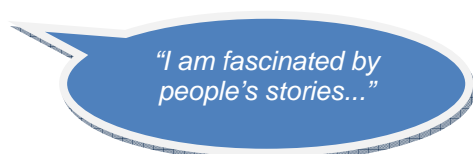
5.2.2 Background to Involvement in Curious Project

Volunteers became aware of the Curious Project through a number of different sources, suggesting that the promotion of the volunteering opportunities was relatively far reaching. Sources included:

- volunteer organisations such as WSREC and Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector who promoted Curious to volunteers they were working with on other projects;
- other training programmes relating to diversity where Curious was mentioned;
- St Mungo Museum itself.

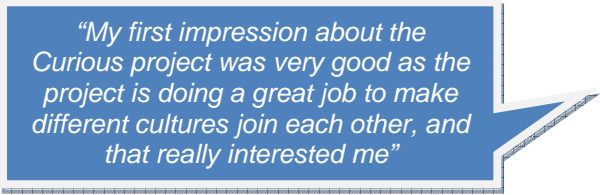
Event volunteers tended to have some previous experience of volunteering. One cited involvement in the programme 'Glasgow in the Making' which had a similar underlying theme to Curious and another mentioned a programme in East Renfrewshire which involved volunteers as champions of local history and tradition.

The key trigger to involvement in the Curious Project was about meeting people and learning about different cultures in an accessible setting.

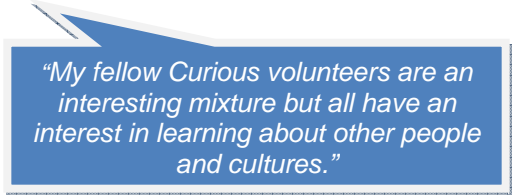


"..to listen and to find ideas. To find out what you are thinking about me, what you think about yourself and how we live in this world."

The opportunity to understand more about the diversity within society was an important secondary motivation.

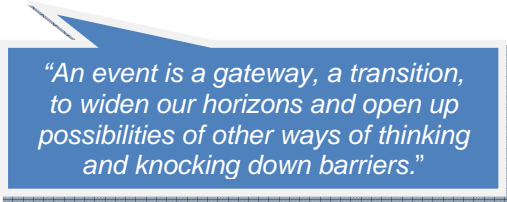


"My first impression about the Curious project was very good as the project is doing a great job to make different cultures join each other, and that really interested me"



"My fellow Curious volunteers are an interesting mixture but all have an interest in learning about other people and cultures."

Interestingly, the volunteers who attended the group discussion were keen to point out that the idea of simply volunteering was not the reason for their involvement; rather this was almost viewed as simply the means to facilitate their learning about cultural diversity.



"An event is a gateway, a transition, to widen our horizons and open up possibilities of other ways of thinking and knocking down barriers."

5.2.3 Highlights of Involvement

It was clear from the feedback that volunteers were given the opportunity to get involved in a wide range of activities, and from the perspective of participants this was a real strength of the programme.

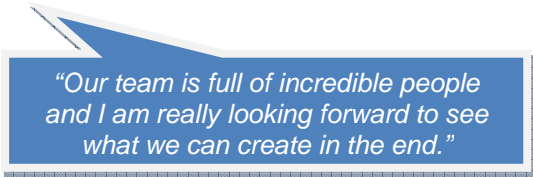
There were three core strands of activity discussed within the group:

- Event for Refugee Week
- Involvement in curating their own exhibition in the community events space at St Mungo Museum reflecting on their experiences, including through the creation of a video
- Weekly activities (such as cooking, music, photography, storytelling, IT skills, talks, journals, drama and more)

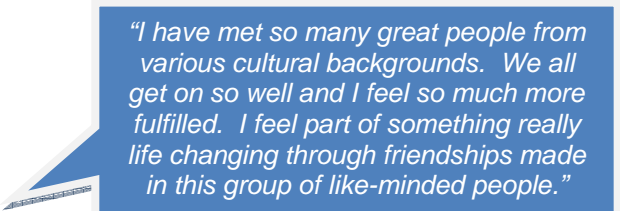
The diverse nature of the events undertaken during their time as volunteers was cited as a particular strength of the programme and the mix of familiar and new activities and experiences was crucial to ensuring that the programme delivered on different levels. Activities that were familiar, such as cooking and storytelling were found to be particularly relaxing and enjoyable whilst activities and experiences that were new, such as public speaking, photography and talks on challenging themes like politics, were rewarding as a result of their inherent challenge.

Engaging in a variety of activities such as this allowed the volunteers to learn new skills and push their own boundaries, and in doing so learn more about themselves as well as learning about and from others.

In addition to this, there were many benefits of participation highlighted, mostly centring on the general atmosphere created within the space and team and the dynamics of the group.

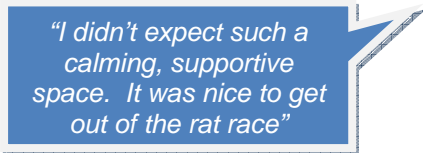


"Our team is full of incredible people and I am really looking forward to see what we can create in the end."

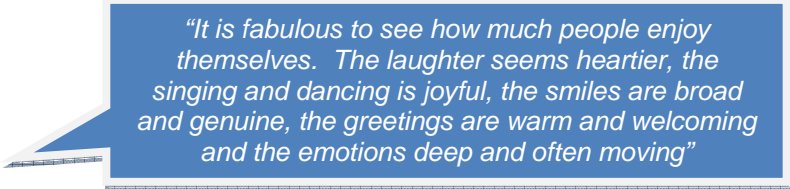


"I have met so many great people from various cultural backgrounds. We all get on so well and I feel so much more fulfilled. I feel part of something really life changing through friendships made in this group of like-minded people."

The atmosphere was described as fundamentally open and mutually supportive which was considered a strong foundation for working together. Volunteers found participating in the programme relaxing and enjoyable and particularly appreciated the opportunity to stop and think.




"I didn't expect such a calming, supportive space. It was nice to get out of the rat race"

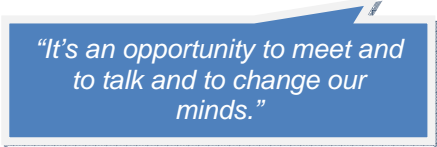


"It is fabulous to see how much people enjoy themselves. The laughter seems heartier, the singing and dancing is joyful, the smiles are broad and genuine, the greetings are warm and welcoming and the emotions deep and often moving"

The opportunity to meet, interact and work with a diverse range of people with different backgrounds was one of the key drivers of participation in the volunteer team. This was clearly achieved throughout the experience. The positive and supportive atmosphere allowed them time to listen to and appreciate different perspectives. Volunteers mentioned that dealing with such a diverse group of people with different personalities was at times challenging, but this too was ultimately viewed in a positive way as it provided a good opportunity for learning about themselves and others.

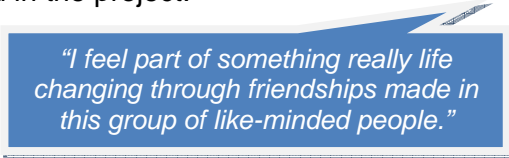


"Everyone has a different take on things"



"It's an opportunity to meet and to talk and to change our minds."

Real friendships were formed between volunteers, which helped to reinforce the positive benefits of being involved in the project.



"I feel part of something really life changing through friendships made in this group of like-minded people."

5.2.4 Challenges and Overcoming Issues

It was clear from speaking to participants and from the written sources provided such as journal extracts, stories and feedback forms, that involvement in the Curious Project had been an overwhelmingly positive experience for volunteers. That said, there were some challenges faced by volunteers primarily of a practical nature during the programme, which were highlighted within the evaluation.

The main issue raised by volunteers who participated in the focus group, related to the required time commitment. Respondents talked about initially getting involved for 2 hours at weekends, but mentioned that this had quickly increased to 4 hours and then whole days. In addition, some were being asked on a regular basis to be involved during the week. While volunteers happily participated because they enjoyed what they were doing, it was clear that quite a lot of pressure was being put on their lives by the commitment required to participate in the project.

It is important to note that volunteers **did** feel that there was scope to opt in and out as they needed to, and the pressure they felt was not imposed upon them by the Curious team, rather it was self-imposed, related to their feeling that as they had more available time than other volunteers, they should take on more of the burden.


There were some very minor concerns raised about the organisation and management of the volunteers by those who participated in the research. These volunteers felt that there was a

lack of clarity around the overall structure to the programme which led to some uncertainties over what was expected of volunteers and the respective roles and responsibilities of volunteers and museum staff. In addition, some changes to the schedule led to at least one occasion of repetition in the programme when one staff member was unaware that an activity or topic had already been covered by another staff member.

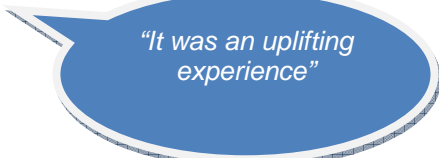
Finally, although the provision of bus tickets was perceived as a good way of ensuring less affluent volunteers could attend, they were not considered of any great value to the participants in the focus group. These respondents also raised an issue regarding subsistence whilst participating in the programme. They felt strongly that Glasgow Museums should have provided more refreshments to volunteers. Although tea and coffee were provided at each session and lunch was provided when full days of volunteering work were being undertaken, focus group participants felt the catering provision could have been extended. This was considered particularly important for those on lower incomes who were unable to afford to buy refreshments at the meetings. A further suggestion was that provision of child care should be considered as volunteers felt this would have allowed the young mothers of the group to more fully engage.

5.2.5 Benefits and Impact of Participation

Volunteers clearly benefited from participating in the Curious Project and viewed the experience in a very positive light.

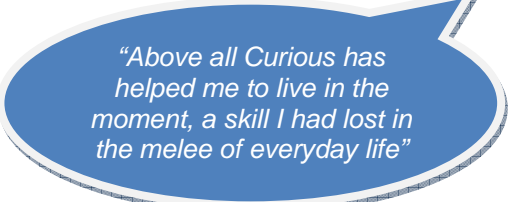


"It has been just the most enriching experience I have had in years"




"It was an uplifting experience"

Benefits identified by volunteers ranged from the personal - relating to gaining new friends and thinking about issues from different perspectives; to the practical - learning how to run an event.



"Above all Curious has helped me to live in the moment, a skill I had lost in the melee of everyday life"

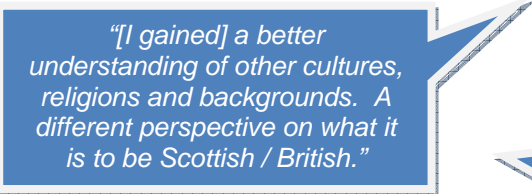


"I have made long lasting friendships."

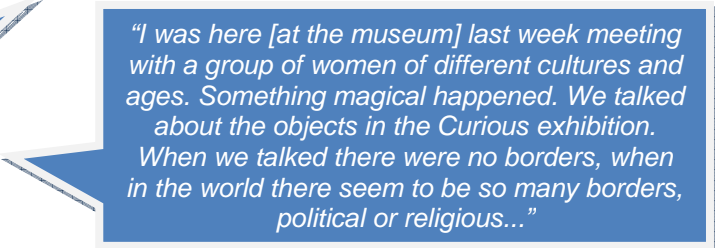


"Improved team working and event management skills"

The ability to interact with people from different cultures in a spirit of common purpose ensured that volunteers were able to learn about each other in a very hands-on and open way which in turn impacted positively on their ability to organise and run the relevant events.

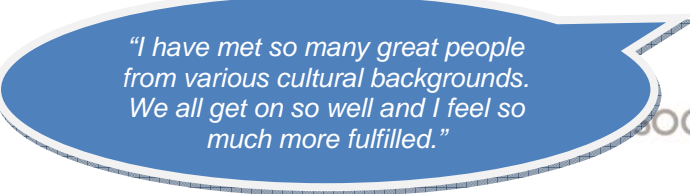


"[I gained] a better understanding of other cultures, religions and backgrounds. A different perspective on what it is to be Scottish / British."



"I was here [at the museum] last week meeting with a group of women of different cultures and ages. Something magical happened. We talked about the objects in the Curious exhibition. When we talked there were no borders, when in the world there seem to be so many borders, political or religious..."

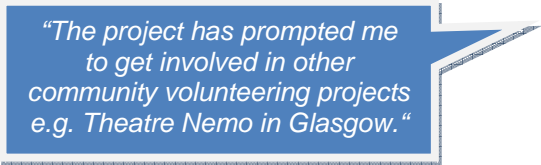
This greater understanding of different cultures and religions was the main takeout for respondents in the group discussion, who felt that whilst the experience had not changed them or their thinking fundamentally, it had rather confirmed what they already thought, broadened their understanding and cleared up some misconceptions.



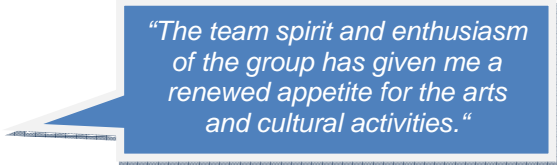
"I have met so many great people from various cultural backgrounds. We all get on so well and I feel so much more fulfilled."

A further benefit of participation was in challenging the views of some volunteers about museums. Having participated in the Curious Project and spent a considerable amount of time at St Mungo Museum in the course of volunteering, they expressed a view that they were now able to see museums as living places rather than static collections. Those who experienced this change in perspective felt that initiatives such as the Curious Project were an excellent way of challenging and changing long held ideas about the nature of museums.

Some volunteers suggested that their participation had renewed their interest in the arts, whilst for others it encouraged them to seek out other volunteering opportunities.

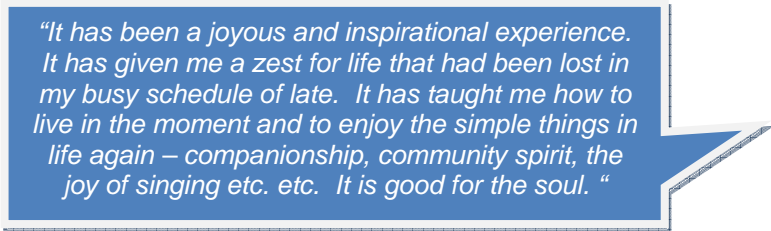


"The project has prompted me to get involved in other community volunteering projects e.g. Theatre Nemo in Glasgow."



"The team spirit and enthusiasm of the group has given me a renewed appetite for the arts and cultural activities."

When relating all of these benefits back to the expectations volunteers had on joining the programme, it is clear that initial expectations were met, and in many respects exceeded.



"It has been a joyous and inspirational experience. It has given me a zest for life that had been lost in my busy schedule of late. It has taught me how to live in the moment and to enjoy the simple things in life again – companionship, community spirit, the joy of singing etc. etc. It is good for the soul. "

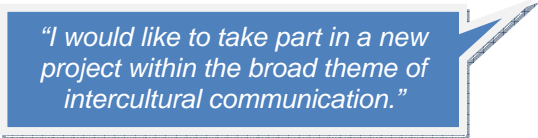
5.2.6 Anticipated Legacy

Whilst on an individual level, the main legacy of participation in the volunteer initiative was very personal and focused on leaving participants with a much greater sense of cultural understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity and similarity, respondents were interested in what the broader legacy would be of the volunteer initiative. They felt it was important that the learnings they had experienced as a group should be taken out to the community on a wider scale.

As such, the volunteers suggested that an ongoing programme of events and activities could be undertaken in schools, with refugees and generally within communities, with the overarching aim of facilitating cultural integration and breaking down barriers and prejudices between people of different backgrounds.

The key ingredients of successfully delivering such a programme were felt to be:

- Space to bring together diverse groups of people
- Undertake activities that foster mutual understanding and respect



"I would like to take part in a new project within the broad theme of intercultural communication."

Above all, volunteers were keen to ensure that the experiences they had and events they contributed to would not simply be forgotten.

6 Conclusions

6.1 Curious Exhibition

The Curious Exhibition evaluation was in two distinct parts relating to those involved in its development and those who visited it, with findings quite different between the two.

The exhibition development, like the other participatory elements within the Curious Project, delivered clear benefits to those involved. Through exploring objects in the Glasgow Museums Resource Centre, using objects to provide opportunities to discuss and share their own personal memories and experiences and facilitating participation in creative tasks like drawing painting and animation, the groups and individuals involved gained new skills and a broadening of their perspectives. For many, the experience challenged their views on museums and encouraged them to think about museums and exhibitions in a different, more positive light. For some, new skills were learned and for others English language skills were improved.

With both practical and emotional benefits, the work sessions held in the development phase for the exhibition were successful in engaging non-traditional museum visitors, demonstrating that museums can be accessible and interesting and introducing them to the breadth of the Glasgow Museums collections.

Feedback on the visitor experience was somewhat mixed. Whilst the vast majority of visitors enjoyed their visit to the Curious Exhibition, very few fully grasped its purpose or understood its aims.

The main issue which prevented visitors from fully engaging with the exhibition was lack of clarity in terms of context within which to understand the exhibition, practically how to navigate around it and more generally about the purpose and aims of the project behind the exhibition.

Those who did grasp the concept were very positive about the exhibition, and clearly got a lot out of it in terms of learning and challenging perceptions about different cultures. For this group the personal response led approach and eclectic mix of objects within the exhibition really enhanced their experience and encouraged them to think more about the similarities and differences between their own and other cultures.

For future exhibitions where a community curated approach is taken, it would be useful to add more explanations, context and guidance to help visitors understand and enjoy the experience more fully.

The fact that almost all visitors who were included in the research thought that the Curious Project, and its key themes of cultural understanding and integration, was both interesting and important suggests that an opportunity was missed to engage more people and more fully achieve the project aims.

For those who understood and engaged with the exhibition it also presented the museum experience in a different way than visitors were used to, encouraging them to explore their own memories and react in their own way to objects, which was viewed very positively. However, for those who did not grasp the concept this aim was not achieved and they were left puzzled about why certain everyday objects had been included within an exhibition.

6.2 Curious Learning Programme

The volume of positive feedback from various sources on the Learning Programme is testament to its delivery against the overall Project objectives. The Programme successfully engaged with a wide range of participants from individuals to workplace groups to ESOL students, all of whom were attracted to and engaged with the theme of learning more about different cultures.

Administrative aspects of the Learning Programme were positively endorsed, and the level of flexibility and tailoring of the course detail that was offered to groups was particularly welcomed. The Curious Team clearly worked collaboratively with group leaders and organisers to ensure that their specific needs were taken on board and that the course content was adapted accordingly, which was considered an ideal model for partnership working.

The content itself was also praised and the facilitative approach with which the sessions were delivered worked extremely well for the majority of participants and enabled them to explore their own thoughts, feelings, assumptions and prejudices in a comfortable, safe and non-judgemental environment. The elements of the Learning Programme which focused on the Curious Exhibition were felt to be less powerful than some of the other exercises, due to a feeling that the size and scope of the exhibition was quite limited, and that the presentation had a temporary feel.

The feedback given by attendees demonstrates that participation in the Learning Programme was not only enjoyable and thought-provoking but had real value in encouraging appreciation of the diversity and similarities between cultures. For some, there were obvious lessons to take back to their workplace about how to deal with a diverse range of people. For others, primarily ESOL students, there was a great sense of comfort taken from learning that generations of immigrants before them had successfully integrated into Glasgow society.

The longer term impacts of attending the programme were also evident in several different ways:

- Creating partnerships between colleges and Glasgow Museums to enable further collaborative working
- Inspiring tutors to consider incorporating some of the exercises from the sessions into their own classrooms
- Encouraging individuals to think differently when interacting with people from different cultures, in personal or professional lives

There were some suggestions for how the Programme could be improved in the future, which were made in the context of further enhancing the experience rather than voiced as criticisms. One of the main ideas was to do more in bringing different groups together within the Learning Programme in order that participants could actually experience interacting and sharing with different cultures.

It seems clear that the Learning Programme achieved several of the key aims of the Curious Project in creating an increased understanding of different people with different cultural backgrounds. In addition it delivered a greater understanding of Glasgow and the city's history and culture.

6.3 Curious Project Events

The evaluation of participants' views from attending the Human Library and Working Songs events, clearly show that both events were successful and enjoyable and achieved the overall aims of the Curious Project.

Each event attracted a diverse range of attendees with different ages, genders and cultural backgrounds represented.

Participants in both events evidently benefited from the hands-on, interactive approach taken which allowed them to properly experience different cultures and different perspectives. At each event, participants showed a real desire to get involved, evidenced by the spontaneous dancing at the Working Songs event and the enthusiasm with which those who participated in the Human Library recounted their conversations with the 'books'.

In both cases, the overall experience and the inclusive approach taken to these events encouraged participants to think in a different way about other cultures:

- Working Songs encouraged people to think about their history and the similarities between cultures, singing as they churned butter
- The Human Library emphasised to many participants that prejudice is still alive in our society, despite the progress that has been made to change views

In addition, the interactivity within each event was viewed as unusual within a museum environment, and caused participants to think differently about museums.

Overall, although very different events, both delivered learning in an accessible way which made people think differently – a key aim of the Curious Project.

The only real improvement that could be applied to future events is to publicise them more widely to encourage wider attendance and allow more people to experience events such as these.

6.4 Volunteer Initiatives

Whilst both volunteer initiatives were different in many respects, they each delivered an enjoyable experience and a range of benefits to volunteers.

Language Tour volunteers came to the experience with very specific personal objectives largely focused on improving their English language skills, whilst Events volunteers were more attracted by the opportunity to learn about different cultures. For both, the inter-cultural theme was important.

The experience of volunteering at St Mungo not only met, but in most cases far exceeded the expectations of those involved.

For Language Tour volunteers, the practical and personal benefits were clear:

- Improved language skills
- Greater understanding of and integration with people from different cultures (especially Scots)
- Improved confidence

In turn, these benefits resulted in a very tangible outcome – better CVs and greater employability potential. The Language Tour volunteers were very clear about the link between their experience at St Mungo, where they learned how to communicate and operate in a UK workplace situation, and finding employment.

The impact of participation on Event volunteers was perhaps less tangible, but they too experienced an increase in confidence, driven by undertaking unfamiliar and challenging tasks during their volunteer time, which also facilitated the learning of new skills.

For both sets of volunteers there were social benefits of participation; from meeting new people, sharing and interacting with people from different cultures with whom they may otherwise never encountered to the forging of lasting friendships.

The volunteering experience also had a lasting impact in terms of views of museums – volunteers from both programmes cited a greater propensity to visit museums in the future as a result of their perspectives having changed by the accessibility and interactivity of the Curious Exhibition and events.

Suggestions for improving the volunteer experience in the future were all focused on practical aspects, such as requiring less of a time commitment per volunteer and extending the catering provision for volunteers. The creation of further volunteer opportunities across the Glasgow Museums collections, and / or the roll-out of the Curious events programme into local communities were suggested by volunteers, highlighting their endorsement of the experience.

It is clear from the volunteer feedback that this element of the project really delivered against its aims, creating links between people of different cultures and in particular enabling some volunteers to feel more integrated into Scottish society, and in changing views about museums. The practical nature of volunteer involvement definitely contributed to the creation of a lasting impact on the lives of those who participated.

6.5 The Curious Project Overall

Viewed as a whole, it is clear that the aims of the Curious Project were largely achieved. Each different element; the exhibition, the learning programme, the volunteer initiatives and the events delivered something slightly different to participants and attendees.

In revisiting each individual aim, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- All elements of the project succeeded in **creating inter-cultural dialogue**, with the Learning Programme and Human Library events particularly effective in this regard
- Most elements of the project successfully achieved an **increased understanding of each other**, although the impact of the Curious Exhibition here was limited to a small number of visitors
- The Learning Programme, Curious Exhibition and Volunteer experience were especially effective in **increasing participants' understanding of Glasgow**
- The Exhibition and its development clearly created an **increased understanding of Glasgow Museum's collections**
- The elements of the project that worked best to **inspire creativity** were the development of the exhibition, the Learning Programme and the Working Songs event.

Elements of the Project which included direct interaction with the Curious Team or with other people, such as the Learning Programme, Exhibition Development and the Human Library event, seemed to deliver the greatest and longest lasting impact – as participants actually experienced what they were learning.

The one element of the Curious Project which perhaps didn't achieve its full potential was the Curious Exhibition itself. The majority of visitors did not fully understand what the exhibition was trying to achieve, how it had been developed, or how it related to the rest of the museum. However when prompted, many visitors found the theme of intercultural dialogue was both interesting and relevant which suggests that visitor experience would have been greatly

enhanced with the provision of more signage and information to explain the project background and help visitors to navigate around the exhibition.

The overall theme of creating intercultural dialogue and enhancing understanding of different cultures is clearly one which resonated across the board and as such the Curious Project was both timely and relevant. Indeed, the topic is one which many participants and visitors felt Glasgow Museums were very well placed to continue exploring and presenting to visitors through further exhibitions and workshops.

Many suggestions were put forward in this vein for continuing to develop the Curious Project and its key themes, through running more localised events, tailoring content to specific groups and generally promoting the work of the Curious Team to a wider audience.

In addition, the methods used in delivering events and the Learning Programme as well as the way with which the Curious Team worked with volunteers demonstrate best practice in working with people from different cultures, which can be used throughout the Glasgow Museums network in the future.

The Curious Project therefore not only delivered an enjoyable experience to participants, but also created a legacy of increased understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity and of museums.

7 Appendix 1 – Curious Exhibition Topic Guide

Curious Project Evaluation Accompanied Visits Topic Guide 20th August 2012

Introduction

- By moderator – name & organisation
- Explanation of what's involved:
 - Look around the exhibition at your leisure
 - Researcher will accompany you and ask you some questions
 - Interview will take around 30 mins
 - £10 incentive for participation (*remember to get signature*)
- Explanation of research and depth interviews:
 - No right or wrong answers
 - Your views are important
- Reassurance over confidentiality and MRS Code of Conduct

Background to Visit

- Respondent details:
 - first name, age, family situation, occupation
- Party composition:
 - Where from, who with
- What made you decide to come to St Mungo's museum today?
 - How did you find out about the museum?
 - Have you visited the museum before?
 - IF YES: when? What made you come back?
- What did you know about St Mungo's museum before today?
- Did you know about the Curious Exhibition before coming to the museum today?
 - IF YES: what did you know about it? How did you find out about it?

Curious Exhibition

- Let's walk around the exhibition now and I'd like you to talk aloud to me as we go. Please point out exhibits that have caught your attention and mention anything else that comes into your head as we go around.....
- For each exhibit selected ask:
 - Why did this catch your attention? What is it about this exhibit that stood out for you? PROBE FOR ALL CONNECTIONS - EMOTIONAL / PRACTICAL
 - Is there enough information about this exhibit?
 - IF NO: what else would you like to know about it?
 - Is it clear why it was selected as part of the exhibition?
 - IF NO: why not?
- RESEARCHER WILL OBSERVE AND MAKE NOTES ON:

- Time taken for visit
- Route taken
- Specific exhibits of interest to visitor
- Manner of interaction with exhibits

Overall Views

- What do you think of the exhibition overall? PROBE FOR DETAILS.
- How well do you think the various objects work together as a collection? Why?
- How well do you think the story-based approach works? Why?

- What did you like best about the Curious Exhibition? PROBE FOR DETAILS.
- What did you like least about the exhibition? PROBE FOR DETAILS.
- Did you learn anything from visiting the exhibition today?
 - What did you learn?
 - How did you learn that?
- What do you think the whole exhibition is trying to communicate to visitors?
 - Is it clear?
- How relevant is the exhibition / its message to you personally?
- The Curious Exhibition is part of a project celebrating the 2012 Olympics and preparing for the 2014 Commonwealth Games. It is based around helping to inspire dialogue and understanding between people of different cultures.
 - How well do you think the exhibition achieves this? Why?
- Has the exhibition changed the way you think about anything or given you a different perspective?
 - IF YES: What? How has your thinking changed? Why?

- Overall, did you enjoy the exhibition today? Why?

- Thank & Close

Curious Project Evaluation

Accompanied Visits Self Completion Sheet

Name: _____

Date: _____

Gender:



Age:

16-24

45-54

25-34

55-64

35-44

65+

What I liked about the exhibition.....



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What I think about the exhibition.....



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What I will take away with me.....



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8 Appendix 2 – Curious Learning Programme Topic Guides

Curious Project Evaluation Learning Programme Topic Guide Final 7th September 2012

Introduction

- By moderator – name & organisation
- Explanation of research and group discussions:
 - No right or wrong answers
 - Everyone's views are important
- Outline format of session
 - Will last around 90 mins
 - Discussion around experience and learnings from the Curious Project
- Explanation of recording – audio
- Reassurance over confidentiality and MRS Code of Conduct
- Individual introductions: name, age, where from (organisation)

Background to Attending

- How did you first hear about the Curious Project?
 - Who from?
 - What did you hear about it?
- How did you get involved in the Learning Programme?
 - PROBE: personal choice vs asked to attend
- What made you want to participate?
 - What was it that got you interested? Why?
- What did you know about the programme prior to attending?
- What did you hope to get out of participating in the Curious Project Learning Programme?
- When did you attend & where?
- Have you been involved in anything like this before?
 - IF YES: what?

Learning Programme

- How well do you think the Learning Programme was organised? Why?
- Is there anything that could have been improved about the organisation?
- What did you think of the programme content? Why?
 - Did anything stand out as particularly useful? What? Why was this useful?
 - Was there anything you didn't find relevant? What? Why?

- Was anything missing? What?
- How did you find the facilitative approach used to deliver the learning programme?
 - Did this impact on the way you perceived the programme? PROBE: positive / negative impacts
 - PROBE: empowering / frustrating / engaging...?
 - Have you experienced this type of learning approach before?
 - How comfortable are you with the facilitative approach?
- Would you recommend any changes to the content or delivery? What? Why?
 - What impact would these changes have?

Overall Views and Outcomes

- Did you learn anything new from participating in the Curious Learning Programme?
 - What did you learn?
- Did the Learning Programme change the way you think about anything or given you a different perspective?
 - IF YES: What? How has your thinking changed? Why?
- Do you think your participation in the Learning Programme is most relevant to your personal or working life? Why?
- What impact, if any, do you think your learnings from the programme will have on your working life?
 - IF IMPACT EXPECTED: What will you do differently as a result? Why? How will this benefit you / your colleagues?
 - IF NO IMPACT: why not?
- And what impact, if any, will it have on your personal life?
 - IF IMPACT EXPECTED: What will you do differently as a result? Why? How will this benefit you / your friends, family, neighbours?
 - IF NO IMPACT: why not?
- Has your involvement changed the way you think about museums or how you relate to objects? Why? How?
- Thinking back to when you first signed up for the Learning Programme – did it turn out the way you expected? Why / why not?
- Overall how do you feel about your participation in the Curious Project Learning Programme? PROBE FOR DETAILS.
- How has the information / lessons you learned been communicated within your organisation / group?
- ASK COLLEGE TUTORS: how confident would you feel about delivering aspects of the learning programme to your students in the future? Why?
- Any further comments?

Thank & Close

9 Appendix 3 – Volunteer Initiative Topic Guides

Curious Project Evaluation Volunteer Groups Topic Guide Final 7th September 2012

Introduction

- By moderator – name & organisation
- Explanation of research and group discussions:
 - No right or wrong answers
 - Everyone's views are important
- Outline format of session
 - Will last around 90 mins
 - Discussion around experience and learnings from the Curious Project
- Explanation of recording – audio
- Reassurance over confidentiality and MRS Code of Conduct
- Individual introductions: name, age, where from in Glasgow

Background to Involvement

- How did you first hear about the Curious Project?
 - Who from?
 - What did you hear about it?
- When did you first get involved with the Curious Project?
- What made you want to get involved?
 - What was it that got you interested / motivated? Why?
- What did you hope to get out of participating in the Curious Project?
- Have you been involved in anything like this before?
 - IF YES: what?
 - PROBE: museum related / other volunteering etc

Curious Project Involvement

- Talk me through what you've done during your time volunteering as part of the Curious Project....
- Were any of the tasks / activities new to you? Things you hadn't done before?
 - IF YES: How did you feel about this? How confident were you in tackling these tasks / activities?
- Were there any particular challenges? What?

- How did you overcome these?
- How well do you think the Project was organised? Why?
- How easy did you find it to participate?
 - PROBE: amount of time required, logistics etc
- Did provision of bus tickets make a difference to you? Why?
 - What would the impact have been on you if these were not provided?
- Is there anything that could have been improved in the way the Project was organised?
 - IF YES: What? Why would that have helped?

Overall Views and Outcomes

- Overall how do you feel about your participation in the Curious Project? PROBE FOR DETAILS.
- What were the highlights of participating for you? PROBE FOR DETAILS.
- Were there any low points? PROBE FOR DETAILS.
- Did you learn anything new from participating in the Curious Project? PROBE: information and skills
 - What did you learn?
 - How did you learn that?
 - Will the lessons learned be useful to you in the future? Why / why not? How?
- Has your participation in the Curious Project changed the way you think about anything or given you a different perspective?
 - IF YES: What? How has your thinking changed? Why?
 - Can you see this impacting on your everyday life? How?
- Have you benefited in any other way? PROBE: confidence / language skills etc
 - How will this impact on your life in the future?
- Has your involvement changed the way you think about museums or how you relate to objects? Why? How?
- Thinking back to when you first got involved with the Curious Project – did it turn out the way you expected? Why / why not?
- Any further comments?

Thank & Close

10 Appendix 4 – List of Secondary Data Sources

Strand	Area	Documents
Volunteers	Volunteer Events Team	February 2012 Volunteer Events Team External Facilitator notes 4/2/12
Volunteers	Volunteer Events Team	Extract from journal of one of the Volunteer Events Team from Apr 2012
Volunteers	Volunteer Events Team	3 completed forms designed by Legacy Trust UK (funders) for Inspire Mark projects
Volunteers	Volunteer Events Team	Stories from Volunteer Events Team
Volunteers	Language Tour Volunteers	Brief feedback forms from Language Tour Volunteers on expectations and what they hoped to gain from Curious.
Events	Human Library	Short films with books & borrowers on day of human library
Events	Human Library	Ad-hoc emails re Human Library
Events	Working Songs	Working songs evaluation responses
Events	Working Songs	Working songs event descriptors
Events	Working Songs	Drawings in response to the event
Events	Working Songs	Blog comments
Learning Programme		CurioUS Postcard Evaluation Responses
Learning Programme		CurioUS Evaluation Responses - Anniesland College Letters
Learning Programme		CurioUS Postcard Evaluation Responses - 14th June 2012 physical theatre
Learning Programme		Ad hoc feedback re learning programme – emails from participants & group leaders
Learning Programme		Curious Lasting Impact Case Study – Clydebank College
Learning Programme		Groups Clooty Tree Hands Evaluation
Learning Programme		ESOL Groups Clooty Tree Hands Evaluation
Learning Programme		Glasgow Life Clooty Tree Hands Evaluation
Learning Programme		Individuals Clooty Tree Hands Evaluation
Learning Programme		Stow College - Clooty Tree Hands Evaluation
Learning Programme		CurioUS Evaluation Overall Breakdown
Exhibition	Visitor Comments	Curious Exhibition Comments from visitor book
Exhibition	Visitor Comments	Ad-hoc comments re exhibition
Exhibition	Development	Evaluation feedback from individual participants
Exhibition	Development	Evaluation Responses - Langside ESOL
Exhibition	Development	evaluation Sharing of Faiths ESOL YWCA
Exhibition	Development	Blog comments re exhibition development
Exhibition	Development	Ad hoc emails and comments re exhibition development
Exhibition	Development	YWCA Exhibition development transcripts from filmed interviews
Exhibition	Development	Completed films & diary rooms by young people involved in object selection